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NOVELS

OF

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

Library Edition

THE CAXTON NOVELS

VOL. II.

THE CAXTONS

A Family Picture

BY

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART.

[3.]

"Every family is a history in itself, and even a poem to those who know how to search its pages."—LAMARTINE.

"Di, probos mores docili juventæ,
Di, senectuti placidæ quietem,
Romulæ genti date remque, prolemque,
Et decus omne."
HORAT. *Carmen Sæculare.*

LIBRARY EDITION—IN TWO VOLUMES

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THE CAXTONS.

PART TENTH.

CHAPTER I.

My uncle's conjecture as to the parentage of Francis Vivian seemed to me a positive discovery. Nothing more likely than that this wilful boy had formed some headstrong attachment which no father would sanction, and so, thwarted and irritated, thrown himself on the world. Such an explanation was the more agreeable to me, as it cleared up much that had appeared discreditable in the mystery that surrounded Vivian. I could never bear to think that he had done anything mean and criminal, however I might believe he had been rash and faulty. It was natural that the unfriended wanderer should have been thrown into a society, the equivocal character of which had failed to revolt the audacity of an inquisitive mind and adven-

turous temper; but it was natural, also, that the habits of gentle birth, and that silent education which English gentlemen commonly receive from their very cradle, should have preserved his honour, at least, intact through all. Certainly the pride, the notions, the very faults of the well-born had remained in full force —why not the better qualities, however smothered for the time? I felt thankful for the thought that Vivian was returning to an element in which he might repurify his mind,—refit himself for that sphere to which he belonged;—thankful that we might yet meet, and our present half-intimacy mature, perhaps, into healthful friendship.

It was with such thoughts that I took up my hat the next morning to seek Vivian, and judge if we had gained the right clue, when we were startled by what was a rare sound at our door—the postman's knock. My father was at the Museum; my mother in high conference, or close preparation for our approaching departure, with Mrs Primmins; Roland, I, and Blanche had the room to ourselves.

"The letter is not for me," said Pisistratus.

"Nor for me, I am sure," said the Captain, when the servant entered and confuted him—for the letter was for him. He took it up wonderingly and suspiciously, as Glumdalclitch took up Gulliver, or as (if naturalists) we take up an unknown creature, that we are not quite sure will not bite and sting us. Ah! it has stung or bit you, Captain Roland! for you start and change colour—you suppress a cry as you break

the seal—you breathe hard as you read—and the letter seems short—but it takes time in the reading, for you go over it again and again. Then you fold it up—crumple it—thrust it into your breast-pocket—and look round like a man waking from a dream. Is it a dream of pain or of pleasure? Verily, I cannot guess, for nothing is on that eagle face either of pain or pleasure, but rather of fear, agitation, bewilderment. Yet the eyes are bright, too, and there is a smile on that iron lip.

My uncle looked round, I say, and called hastily for his cane and his hat, and then began buttoning his coat across his broad breast, though the day was hot enough to have unbuttoned every breast in the metropolis.

"You are not going out, uncle?"

"Yes, yes."

"But are you strong enough yet? Let me go with you."

"No, sir; no. Blanche, come here." He took the child in his arms, surveyed her wistfully, and kissed her. "You have never given me pain, Blanche: say, 'God bless and prosper you, father!'"

"God bless and prosper my dear, dear papa!" said Blanche, putting her little hands together, as if in prayer.

"There—that should bring me luck, Blanche," said the Captain, gaily, and setting her down, Then seizing his cane from the servant, and putting on his hat with a determined air, he walked stoutly forth; and I

saw him, from the window, march along the streets as cheerfully as if he had been besieging Badajoz.

"God prosper thee, too!" said I, involuntarily.

And Blanche took hold of my hand, and said in her prettiest way (and her pretty ways were many), "I wish you would come with us, cousin Sisty, and help me to love papa. Poor papa! he wants us both—he wants all the love we can give him!"

"That he does, my dear Blanche; and I think it a great mistake that we don't all live together. Your papa ought not to go to that tower of his at the world's end, but come to our snug, pretty house, with a garden full of flowers, for you to be Queen of the May—from May to November; to say nothing of a duck that is more sagacious than any creature in the Fables I gave you the other day."

Blanche laughed and clapped her hands—"Oh, that would be so nice! But,"—and she stopped gravely, and added, "but then, you see, there would not be the tower to love papa; and I am sure that the tower must love him very much, for he loves it dearly."

It was my turn to laugh now. "I see how it is, you little witch!" said I; "you would coax us to come and live with you and the owls! With all my heart, so far as I am concerned."

"Sisty," said Blanche, with an appalling solemnity on her face, "do you know what I've been thinking?"

"Not I, miss—what?—something very deep, I can see—very horrible, indeed, I fear—you look so serious."

"Why, I've been thinking," continued Blanche, not

relaxing a muscle, and without the least bit of a blush —"I've been thinking that I'll be your little wife; and then, of course, we shall all live together."

Blanche did not blush, but I did. "Ask me that ten years hence, if you dare, you impudent little thing; and now, run away to Mrs Primmins, and tell her to keep you out of mischief, for I must say 'good morning.'"

But Blanche did not run away, and her dignity seemed exceedingly hurt at my mode of taking her alarming proposition, for she retired into a corner pouting, and sat down with great majesty. So there I left her, and went my way to Vivian. He was out; but, seeing books on his table, and having nothing to do, I resolved to wait for his return. I had enough of my father in me to turn at once to the books for company; and, by the side of some graver works which I had recommended, I found certain novels in French, that Vivian had got from a circulating library. I had a curiosity to read these—for, except the old classic novels of France, this mighty branch of its popular literature was new to me. I soon got interested, but what an interest!—the interest that a nightmare might excite, if one caught it out of one's sleep, and set to work to examine it. By the side of what dazzling shrewdness, what deep knowledge of those holes and corners in the human system, of which Goethe must have spoken when he said somewhere—(if I recollect right, and don't misquote him, which I'll not answer for)—"There is something in every man's heart which, if

we could know, would make us hate him,"—by the side of all this, and of much more that showed prodigious boldness and energy of intellect, what strange exaggeration—what mock nobility of sentiment—what inconceivable perversion of reasoning—what damnable demoralisation ! The true artist, whether in Romance or the Drama, will often necessarily interest us in a vicious or criminal character—but he does not the less leave clear to our reprobation the vice or the crime. But here I found myself called upon not only to feel interest in the villain (which would be perfectly allowable,—I am very much interested in Macbeth and Lovelace),—but to admire and sympathise with the villany itself. Nor was it the confusion of all wrong and right in individual character that shocked me the most—but rather the view of society altogether, painted in colours so hideous that, if true, instead of a revolution, it would draw down a deluge ;—it was the hatred, carefully instilled, of the poor against the rich—it was the war breathed between class and class—it was that envy of all superiorities, which loves to show itself by allowing virtue only to a blouse, and asserting that a man must be a rogue if he belong to that rank of society in which, from the very gifts of education, from the necessary associations of circumstance, roguery is the last thing probable or natural. It was all this, and things a thousand times worse, that set my head in a whirl, as hour after hour slipped on, and I still gazed, spell-bound, on these Chimeras and Typhons—these symbols of the Destroying Principle. " Poor

Vivian!" said I, as I rose at last, "if thou readest these books with pleasure, or from habit, no wonder that thou seemest to me so obtuse about right and wrong, and to have a great cavity where thy brain should have the bump of 'conscientiousness' in full salience!"

Nevertheless, to do those demoniacs justice, I had got through time imperceptibly by their pestilent help; and I was startled to see, by my watch, how late it was. I had just resolved to leave a line fixing an appointment for the morrow, and so depart, when I heard Vivian's knock—a knock that had great character in it—haughty, impatient, irregular; not a neat, symmetrical, harmonious, unpretending knock, but a knock that seemed to set the whole house and street at defiance: it was a knock bullying—a knock ostentatious—a knock irritating and offensive—"impiger," and "iracundus."

But the step that came up the stairs did not suit the knock! it was a step light, yet firm—slow, yet elastic.

The maid-servant who had opened the door had, no doubt, informed Vivian of my visit, for he did not seem surprised to see me; but he cast that hurried suspicious look round the room which a man is apt to cast when he has left his papers about, and finds some idler, on whose trustworthiness he by no means depends, seated in the midst of the unguarded secrets. The look was not flattering; but my conscience was so unreproachful that I laid all the blame upon the general suspiciousness of Vivian's character.

"Three hours, at least, have I been here!" said I, maliciously.

"Three hours!"—again the look.

"And this is the worst secret I have discovered,"—and I pointed to those literary Manicheans.

"Oh!" said he, carelessly, "French novels!—I don't wonder you stayed so long. I can't read your English novels—flat and insipid: there are truth and life here."

"Truth and life!" cried I, every hair on my head erect with astonishment—"then hurrah for falsehood and death!"

"They don't please you; no accounting for tastes."

"I beg your pardon—I account for yours, if you really take for truth and life monsters so nefast and flagitious. For heaven's sake, my dear fellow, don't suppose that any man could get on in England—get anywhere but to the Old Bailey or Norfolk Island—if he squared his conduct to such topsy-turvy notions of the world as I find here."

"How many years are you my senior," asked Vivian, sneeringly, "that you should play the mentor, and correct my ignorance of the world?"

"Vivian, it is not age and experience that speak here, it is something far wiser than they—the instinct of a man's heart, and a gentleman's honour."

"Well, well," said Vivian, rather discomposed, "let the poor books alone: you know my creed—that books influence us little one way or the other."

"By the great Egyptian library, and the soul of

Diodorus! I wish you could hear my father upon that point. Come," added I, with sublime compassion—"come, it is not too late—do let me introduce you to my father. I will consent to read French novels all my life, if a single chat with Austin Caxton does not send you home with a happier face and a lighter heart. Come, let me take you back to dine with us to-day."

"I cannot," said Vivian, with some confusion—"I cannot, for this day I leave London. Some other time perhaps—for," he added, but not heartily, "we may meet again."

"I hope so," said I, wringing his hands, "and that is likely,—since, in spite of yourself, I have guessed your secret—your birth and parentage."

"How!" cried Vivian, turning pale, and gnawing his lip—"what do you mean?—speak."

"Well, then, are you not the lost, runaway son of Colonel Vivian? Come, say the truth; let us be confidants."

Vivian threw off a succession of his abrupt sighs; and then, seating himself, leant his face on the table, confused, no doubt, to find himself discovered.

"You are near the mark," said he, at last, "but do not ask me farther yet. Some day," he cried, impetuously, and springing suddenly to his feet—"some day you shall know all: yes; some day, if I live, when that name shall be high in the world: yes, when the world is at my feet!" He stretched his right hand as if to grasp the space, and his whole face was lighted with a fierce enthusiasm. The glow died away, and,

with a slight return of his scornful smile, he said—"Dreams yet; dreams! And now, look at this paper." And he drew out a memoranda, scrawled over with figures.

"This, I think, is my pecuniary debt to you; in a few days I shall discharge it. Give me your address."

"Oh!" said I, pained, "can you speak to me of money, Vivian?"

"It is one of those instincts of honour you cite so often," answered he, colouring. "Pardon me."

"That is my address," said I, stooping to write, in order to conceal my wounded feelings. "You will avail yourself of it, I hope, often, and tell me that you are well and happy."

"When I am happy you shall know."

"You do not require any introduction to Trevanion?"

Vivian hesitated. "No, I think not. If ever I do, I will write for it."

I took up my hat, and was about to go—for I was still chilled and mortified—when, as if by an irresistible impulse, Vivian came to me hastily, flung his arms round my neck, and kissed me as a boy kisses his brother.

"Bear with me!" he cried, in a faltering voice: "I did not think to love any one as you have made me love you, though sadly against the grain. If you are not my good angel, it is that nature and habit are too strong for you. Certainly, some day we shall meet again. I shall have time, in the mean while, to see if the world can be indeed 'mine oyster, which I with sword can

open.' I would be *aut Cæsar aut nullus!* Very little other Latin know I to quote from! If Cæsar, men will forgive me all the means to the end; if *nullus*, London has a river, and in every street one may buy a cord!"

"Vivian! Vivian!"

"Now go, my dear friend, while my heart is softened—go, before I shock you with some return of the native Adam. Go—go!"

And taking me gently by the arm, Francis Vivian drew me from the room, and, re-entering, locked his door.

Ah! if I could have left him Robert Hall instead of those execrable Typhons! But would that medicine have suited his case, or must grim Experience write sterner prescriptions with iron hand?

CHAPTER II.

When I got back, just in time for dinner, Roland had not returned, nor did he return till late in the evening. All our eyes were directed towards him, as we rose with one accord to give him welcome; but his face was like a mask—it was locked, and rigid, and unreadable.

Shutting the door carefully after him, he came to the hearth, stood on it, upright and calm, for a few moments, and then asked—

"Has Blanche gone to bed?"

"Yes," said my mother, "but not to sleep, I am sure; she made me promise to tell her when you came back."

Roland's brow relaxed.

"To-morrow, sister," said he, slowly, "will you see that she has the proper mourning made for her? My son is dead."

"Dead!" we cried with one voice, and surrounding him with one impulse.

"Dead! impossible—you could not say it so calmly. Dead—how do you know? You may be deceived. Who told you?—why do you think so?"

"I have seen his remains," said my uncle, with the same gloomy calm. "We will all mourn for him. Pisis-

tratus, you are heir to my name now, as to your father's. Good-night; excuse me, all—all you dear and kind ones; I am worn out."

Roland lighted his candle and went away, leaving us thunder-struck; but he came back again—looked round—took up his book, open in the favourite passage—nodded again, and again vanished. We looked at each other as if we had seen a ghost. Then my father rose and went out of the room, and remained in Roland's till the night was wellnigh gone! We sat up—my mother and I—till he returned. His benign face looked profoundly sad.

"How is it, sir? Can you tell us more?"

My father shook his head.

"Roland prays that you may preserve the same forbearance you have shown hitherto, and never mention his son's name to him. Peace be to the living as to the dead. Kitty, this changes our plans; we must all go to Cumberland—we cannot leave Roland thus!"

"Poor, poor Roland!" said my mother, through her tears. "And to think that father and son were not reconciled. But Roland forgives him now—oh yes; *now!*"

"It is not Roland we can censure," said my father, almost fiercely; "it is——but enough. We must hurry out of town as soon as we can: Roland will recover in the native air of his old ruins."

We went up to bed mournfully. "And so," thought I, "ends one grand object of my life!—I had hoped to have brought those two together. But, alas! what peacemaker like the grave!"

CHAPTER III.

My uncle did not leave his room for three days, but he was much closeted with a lawyer; and my father dropped some words which seemed to imply that the deceased had incurred debts, and that the poor Captain was making some charge on his small property. As Roland had said that he had seen the remains of his son, I took it, at first, for granted that we should attend a funeral, but no word of this was said. On the fourth day, Roland, in deep mourning, entered a hackney coach with the lawyer, and was absent about two hours. I did not doubt that he had thus quietly fulfilled the last mournful offices. On his return, he shut himself up again for the rest of the day, and would not see even my father. But the next morning he made his appearance as usual, and I even thought that he seemed more cheerful than I had yet known him—whether he played a part, or whether the worst was now over, and the grave was less cruel than uncertainty. On the following day, we all set out for Cumberland.

In the interval, Uncle Jack had been almost constantly at the house, and, to do him justice, he had

seemed unaffectedly shocked at the calamity that had befallen Roland. There was, indeed, no want of heart in Uncle Jack, whenever you went straight at it; but it was hard to find if you took a circuitous route towards it through the pockets. The worthy speculator had indeed much business to transact with my father before he left town. The *Anti-Publisher Society* had been set up, and it was through the obstetric aid of that fraternity that the Great Book was to be ushered into the world. The new journal, the *Literary Times*, was also far advanced—not yet out, but my father was fairly in for it. There were preparations for its *début* on a vast scale, and two or three gentlemen in black—one of whom looked like a lawyer, and another like a printer, and a third uncommonly like a Jew—called twice with papers of a very formidable aspect. All these preliminaries settled, the last thing I heard Uncle Jack say, with a slap on my father's back, was, "Fame and fortune both made now!—you may go to sleep in safety, for you leave me wide awake. Jack Tibbets never sleeps!"

I had thought it strange that, since my abrupt exodus from Trevanion's house, no notice had been taken of any of us by himself or Lady Ellinor. But on the very eve of our departure, came a kind note from Trevanion to me, dated from his favourite country seat (accompanied by a present of some rare books to my father), in which he said briefly that there had been illness in his family, which had obliged him to leave town for a change of air, but that Lady Ellinor ex-

pected to call on my mother the next week. He had found amongst his books some curious works of the Middle Ages, amongst others a complete set of Cardan, which he knew my father would like to have, and so sent them. There was no allusion to what had passed between us.

In reply to this note, after due thanks on my father's part, who seized upon the Cardan (Lyons edition, 1663, ten volumes folio) as a silk-worm does upon a mulberry-leaf, I expressed our joint regrets that there was no hope of our seeing Lady Ellinor, as we were just leaving town. I should have added something on the loss my uncle had sustained, but my father thought that, since Roland shrank from any mention of his son, even by his nearest kindred, it would be his obvious wish not to parade his affliction beyond that circle.

And there had been illness in Trevanion's family! On whom had it fallen? I could not rest satisfied with that general expression, and I took my answer myself to Trevanion's house, instead of sending it by the post. In reply to my inquiries, the porter said that all the family were expected at the end of the week; that he had heard both Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion had been rather poorly, but that they were now better. I left my note with orders to forward it; and my wounds bled afresh as I came away.

We had the whole coach to ourselves in our journey, and a silent journey it was, till we arrived at a little town about eight miles from my uncle's residence, to which we could only get through a cross-road. My

uncle insisted on preceding us that night, and, though he had written, before we started, to announce our coming, he was fidgety lest the poor tower should not make the best figure it could; so he went alone, and we took our ease at our inn.

Betimes the next day we hired a fly-coach—for a chaise could never have held us and my father's books—and jogged through a labyrinth of villanous lanes, which no Marshal Wade had ever reformed from their primal chaos. But poor Mrs Primmins and the canary-bird alone seemed sensible of the jolts; the former, who sat opposite to us wedged amidst a medley of packages, all marked "Care, to be kept top uppermost" (why I know not, for they were but books, and whether they lay top or bottom it could not materially affect their value),—the former, I say, contrived to extend her arms over those *disjecta membra*, and, griping a window-sill with the right hand, and a window-sill with the left, kept her seat rampant, like the split eagle of the Austrian Empire—in fact, it would be well now-a-days if the split eagle were as firm as Mrs Primmins! As for the canary, it never failed to respond, by an astonished chirp, to every "Gracious me!" and "Lord save us!" which the delve into a rut, or the bump out of it, sent forth from Mrs Primmins's lips, with all the emphatic dolor of the "Aἴ, αἴ!" in a Greek chorus.

But my father, with his broad hat over his brows, was in deep thought. The scenes of his youth were

rising before him, and his memory went, smooth as a spirit's wing, over delve and bump. And my mother, who sat next him, had her arm on his shoulder, and was watching his face jealously. Did she think that, in that thoughtful face, there was regret for the old love? Blanche, who had been very sad, and had wept much and quietly since they put on her the mourning, and told her that she had no brother (though she had no remembrance of the lost), began now to evince infantine curiosity and eagerness to catch the first peep of her father's beloved tower. And Blanche sat on my knee, and I shared her impatience. At last there came in view a church spire—a church—a plain square building near it, the parsonage (my father's old home), —a long straggling street of cottages and rude shops, with a better kind of house here and there—and in the hinder ground, a grey deformed mass of wall and ruin, placed on one of those eminences on which the Danes loved to pitch camp or build fort, with one high, rude, Anglo-Norman tower rising from the midst. Few trees were round it, and those either poplars or firs, save, as we approached, one mighty oak—integral and unscathed. The road now wound behind the parsonage, and up a steep ascent. Such a road! the whole parish ought to have been flogged for it! If I had sent up a road like that, even on a map, to Dr Herman, I should not have sat down in comfort for a week to come!

The fly-coach came to a full stop.

"Let us get out," cried I, opening the door, and springing to the ground to set the example.

Blanche followed, and my respected parents came next. But when Mrs Primmins was about to heave herself into movement,

"*Papæ!*" said my father. "I think, Mrs Primmins, you must remain in, to keep the books steady."

"Lord love you!" cried Mrs Primmins, aghast.

"The subtraction of such a mass, or *moles*—supple and elastic as all flesh is, and fitting into the hard corners of the inert matter—such a subtraction, Mrs Primmins, would leave a vacuum which no natural system, certainly no artificial organisation, could sustain. There would be a regular dance of atoms, Mrs Primmins; my books would fly here, there, on the floor, out of the window!

'*Corporis officium est quoniam omnia deorsum.*'

The business of a body like yours, Mrs Primmins, is to press all things down—to keep them tight, as you will know one of these days—that is, if you will do me the favour to read Lucretius, and master that material philosophy, of which I may say, without flattery, my dear Mrs Primmins, that you are a living illustration."

These, the first words my father had spoken since we set out from the inn, seemed to assure my mother that she need have no apprehension as to the character of his thoughts, for her brow cleared, and she said, laughing,

"Only look at poor Primmins, and then at that hill!"

"You may subtract Primmins, if you will be answer-

able for the remnant, Kitty. Only, I warn you that it is against all the laws of physics."

So saying, he sprang lightly forward, and, taking hold of my arm, paused and looked round, and drew the loud free breath with which we draw native air.

"And yet," said my father, after that grateful and affectionate inspiration—"and yet, it must be owned, that a more ugly country one cannot see out of Cambridgeshire." *

"Nay," said I, "it is bold and large, it has a beauty of its own. Those immense, undulating, uncultivated, treeless tracks have surely their charm of wildness and solitude! And how they suit the character of the ruin! All is feudal there! I understand Roland better now."

"I hope to heaven Cardan will come to no harm!" cried my father; "he is very handsomely bound; and he fitted beautifully just into the fleshiest part of that fidgety Primmins."

Blanche, meanwhile, had run far before us, and I followed first. There were still the remains of that deep trench (surrounding the ruins on three sides, leaving a ragged hill-top at the fourth) which made the favourite fortification of all the Teutonic tribes. A causeway, raised on brick arches, now, however, supplied the place of the drawbridge, and the outer gate was but a mass of picturesque ruin. Entering into the courtyard or

* This certainly cannot be said of Cumberland generally, one of the most beautiful counties in Great Britain. But the immediate district to which Mr Caxton's exclamation refers, if not ugly, is at least savage, bare, and rude.

bailey, the old castle mound, from which justice had been dispensed, was in full view, rising higher than the broken walls around it, and partially overgrown with brambles. And there stood, comparatively whole, the Tower or Keep, and from its portals emerged the veteran owner.

His ancestors might have received us in more state, but certainly they could not have given us a warmer greeting. In fact, in his own domain Roland appeared another man. His stiffness, which was a little repulsive to those who did not understand it, was all gone. He seemed less proud, precisely because he and his pride, on that ground, were on good terms with each other. How gallantly he extended—not his arm, in our modern Jack-and-Jill sort of fashion—but his right hand to my mother; how carefully he led her over "brake, bush, and scaur," through the low-vaulted door, where a tall servant, who, it was easy to see, had been a soldier—in the precise livery, no doubt, warranted by the heraldic colours (his stockings were red!)—stood upright as a sentry. And, coming into the hall, it looked absolutely cheerful—it took us by surprise. There was a great fire-place, and, though it was still summer, a great fire! It did not seem a bit too much, for the walls were stone, the lofty roof open to the rafters, while the windows were small and narrow, and so high and so deep sunk that one seemed in a vault. Nevertheless, I say the room looked sociable and cheerful—thanks principally to the fire, and partly to a very ingenious medley of old tapestry at one end, and matting at the other, fastened

to the lower part of the walls, seconded by an arrangement of furniture which did credit to my uncle's taste for the picturesque. After we had looked about and admired to our heart's content, Roland took us—not up one of those noble staircases you see in the later manorial residences—but a little winding stone stair, into the rooms he had appropriated to his guests. There was first a small chamber, which he called my father's study—in truth, it would have done for any philosopher or saint who wished to shut out the world—and might have passed for the interior of such a column as the Stylites inhabited; for you must have climbed a ladder to have looked out of the window, and then the vision of no short-sighted man could have got over the interval in the wall made by the narrow casement, which, after all, gave no other prospect than a Cumberland sky, with an occasional rook in it. But my father, I think I have said before, did not much care for scenery, and he looked round with great satisfaction upon the retreat assigned him.

"We can knock up shelves for your books in no time," said my uncle, rubbing his hands.

"It would be a charity," quoth my father, "for they have been very long in a recumbent position, and would like to stretch themselves, poor things. My dear Roland, this room is made for books—so round and so deep. I shall sit here like Truth in a well."

"And there is a room for you, sister, just out of it," said my uncle, opening a little, low, prison-like door into a charming room, for its window was low, and it

had an iron balcony; "and out of that is the bedroom. For you, Pisistratus, my boy, I am afraid that it is soldier's quarters, indeed, with which you will have to put up. But never mind; in a day or two we shall make all worthy a general of your illustrious name—for he was a great general, Pisistratus the First—was he not, brother?"

"All tyrants are," said my father; "the knack of soldiering is indispensable to them."

"Oh, you may say what you please here," said Roland, in high good-humour, as he drew me down stairs, still apologising for my quarters, and so earnestly, that I made up my mind that I was to be put into an *oubliette*. Nor were my suspicions much dispelled on seeing that we had to leave the keep, and pick our way into what seemed to me a mere heap of rubbish, on the dexter side of the court. But I was agreeably surprised to find, amidst these wrecks, a room with a noble casement, commanding the whole country, and placed immediately over a plot of ground cultivated as a garden. The furniture was ample, though homely; the floors and walls well matted; and, altogether, despite the inconvenience of having to cross the courtyard to get to the rest of the house, and being wholly without the modern luxury of a bell, I thought that I could not be better lodged.

"But this is a perfect bower, my dear uncle! Depend on it, it was the bower-chamber of the Dames de Caxton—heaven rest them!"

"No," said my uncle, gravely; "I suspect it must

have been the chaplain's room, for the chapel was to the right of you. An earlier chapel, indeed, formerly existed in the keep tower—for, indeed, it is scarcely a true keep without chapel, well, and hall. I can show you part of the roof of the first, and the two last are entire ; the well is very curious, formed in the substance of the wall at one angle of the wall. In Charles the First's time, our ancestor lowered his only son down in a bucket, and kept him there six hours, while a Malignant mob was storming the tower. I need not say that our ancestor himself scorned to hide from such a rabble, for *he* was a grown man. The boy lived to be a sad spendthrift, and used the well for cooling his wine. He drank up a great many good acres."

"I should scratch him out of the pedigree, if I were you. But pray, have you not discovered the proper chamber of that great Sir William, about whom my father is so shamefully sceptical?"

"To tell you a secret," answered the Captain, giving me a sly poke in the ribs, "I have put your father into it! There are the initial letters W. C. let into the cusp of the York rose, and the date, three years before the battle of Bosworth, over the chimneypiece."

I could not help joining my uncle's grim, low laugh at this characteristic pleasantry ; and after I had complimented him on so judicious a mode of proving his point, I asked him how he could possibly have contrived to fit up the ruin so well, especially as he had scarcely visited it since his purchase.

"Why," said he, "some years ago, that poor fellow

you now see as my servant, and who is gardener, bailiff, seneschal, butler, and anything else you can put him to, was sent out of the army on the invalid list. So I placed him here; and as he is a capital carpenter, and has had a very fair education, I told him what I wanted, and put by a small sum every year for repairs and furnishing. It is astonishing how little it cost me; for Bolt, poor fellow (that is his name), caught the right spirit of the thing, and most of the furniture (which you see is ancient and suitable) he picked up at different cottages and farm-houses in the neighbourhood. As it is, however, we have plenty more rooms here and there—only, of late," continued my uncle, slightly changing colour, "I had no money to spare. But come," he resumed, with an evident effort—"come and see my barrack: it is on the other side of the hall, and made out of what no doubt were the butteries."

We reached the yard and found the fly-coach had just crawled to the door. My father's head was buried deep in the vehicle,—he was gathering up his packages, and sending out, oracle-like, various muttered objurgations and anathemas upon Mrs Primmins and her vacuum; which Mrs Primmins, standing by and making a lap with her apron to receive the packages and anathemas simultaneously, bore with the mildness of an angel, lifting up her eyes to heaven and murmuring something about "poor old bones." Though, as for Mrs Primmins's bones, they had been myths these twenty years, and you might as soon have found a Plesiosaurus in the fat lands of Romney Marsh as a

bone amidst those layers of flesh in which my poor father thought he had so carefully cottoned up his Cardan.

Leaving these parties to adjust matters between them, we stepped under the low doorway, and entered Roland's room. Oh, certainly Bolt *had* caught the spirit of the thing!—certainly he had penetrated down to the pathos that lay within the deeps of Roland's character. Buffon says "the style is the man;" there, the room was the man. That nameless, inexpressible, soldier-like, methodical neatness which belonged to Roland—that was the first thing that struck one—that was the general character of the whole. Then, in details, there, in stout oak shelves, were the books on which my father loved to jest his more imaginative brother,—there they were, Froissart, Barante, Joinville, the *Mort d'Arthur*, *Amadis of Gaul*, Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, a noble copy of Strutt's *Horda*, Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, Percy's *Reliques*, Pope's *Homer*, books on gunnery, archery, hawking, fortification—old chivalry and modern war together cheek-by-jowl.

Old chivalry and modern war!—look to that tilting helmet with the tall Caxton crest, and look to that trophy near it, a French cuirass—and that old banner (a knight's pennon) surmounting those crossed bayonets. And over the chimney-piece there—bright, clean, and, I warrant you, dusted daily—are Roland's own sword, his holsters and pistols, yea, the saddle, pierced and lacerated, from which he had reeled when that leg—I gasped—I felt it all at a glance, and I stole softly to

the spot, and, had Roland not been there, I could have kissed that sword as reverently as if it had been a Bayard's or a Sidney's.

My uncle was too modest to guess my emotion; he rather thought I had turned my face to conceal a smile at his vanity, and said, in a deprecating tone of apology —"It was all Bolt's doing, foolish fellow."

CHAPTER IV.

Our host regaled us with a hospitality that notably contrasted his economical thrifty habits in London. To be sure, Bolt had caught the great pike which headed the feast; and Bolt, no doubt, had helped to rear those fine chickens *ab ovo:* Bolt, I have no doubt, made that excellent Spanish omelette; and, for the rest, the products of the sheepwalk and the garden came in as volunteer auxiliaries—very different from the mercenary recruits by which those metropolitan *Condottieri*, the butcher and greengrocer, hasten the ruin of that melancholy commonwealth, called "genteel poverty."

Our evening passed cheerfully; and Roland, contrary to his custom, was talker in chief. It was eleven o'clock before Bolt appeared with a lantern to conduct me through the courtyard to my dormitory among the ruins—a ceremony which, every night, shine or dark, he insisted upon punctiliously performing.

It was long before I could sleep—before I could believe that but so few days had elapsed since Roland heard of his son's death—that son whose fate had so long tortured him; and yet never had Roland appeared so free from sorrow! Was it natural—was it effort?

Several days passed before I could answer that question, and then not wholly to my satisfaction. Effort there was, or rather resolute, systematic determination. At moments Roland's head drooped, his brows met, and the whole man seemed to sink. Yet these were only moments; he would rouse himself up, like a dozing charger at the sound of a trumpet, and shake off the creeping weight. But whether from the vigour of his determination, or from some aid in other trains of reflection, I could not but perceive that Roland's sadness really was less grave and bitter than it had been, or than it was natural to suppose. He seemed to transfer, daily, more and more, his affections from the dead to those around him, especially to Blanche and myself. He let it be seen that he looked on me now as his lawful successor—as the future supporter of his name: he was fond of confiding to me all his little plans, and consulting me on them. He would walk with me around his domains (of which I shall say more hereafter)—point out, from every eminence we climbed, where the broad lands which his forefathers had owned stretched away to the horizon; unfold with tender hand the mouldering pedigree, and rest lingeringly on those of his ancestors who had held martial post, or had died on the field. There was a crusader who had followed Richard to Ascalon; there was a knight who had fought at Agincourt; there was a cavalier (whose picture was still extant), with fair love-locks, who had fallen at Worcester—no doubt the same who had cooled his son in that well which the son devoted to more

agreeable associations. But of all these worthies there was none whom my uncle, perhaps from the spirit of contradiction, valued like that apocryphal Sir William: and why? because when the apostate Stanley turned the fortunes of the field at Bosworth, and when that cry of despair,—"Treason! treason!" burst from the lips of the last Plantagenet, "amongst the faithless," this true soldier, "faithful found!" had fallen in that lion rush which Richard made at his foe. "Your father tells me that Richard was a murderer and usurper," quoth my uncle. "Sir, that might be true or not; but it was not on the field of battle that his followers were to reason in the character of the master who trusted them, especially when a legion of foreign hirelings stood opposed to them. I would not have descended from that turncoat Stanley to be lord of all the lands the earls of Derby can boast of. Sir, in loyalty, men fight and die for a grand principle and a lofty passion; and this brave Sir William was paying back to the last Plantagenet the benefits he had received from the first!"

"And yet it may be doubted," said I, maliciously, "whether William Caxton the printer did not—"

"Plague, pestilence, and fire seize William Caxton the printer, and his invention too!" cried my uncle, barbarously. "When there were only a few books, at least they were good ones; and now they are so plentiful, all they do is to confound the judgment, unsettle the reason, drive the good books out of cultivation, and draw a ploughshare of innovation over every ancient

landmark ; seduce the women, womanise the men, upset states, thrones, and churches ; rear a race of chattering, conceited coxcombs, who can always find books in plenty to excuse them from doing their duty ; make the poor discontented, the rich crotchety and whimsical, refine away the stout old virtues into quibbles and sentiments ! All imagination formerly was expended in noble action, adventure, enterprise, high deeds, and aspirations ! now a man can but be imaginative by feeding on the false excitement of passions he never felt, dangers he never shared ; and he fritters away all there is of life to spare in him upon the fictitious love-sorrows of Bond Street and St James's. Sir, chivalry ceased when the press rose ! and to fasten upon me, as a forefather, out of all men who ever lived and sinned, the very man who has most destroyed what I most valued—who, by the Lord ! with his cursed invention has well-nigh got rid of respect for forefathers altogether—is a cruelty of which my brother had never been capable, if that printer's devil had not got hold of him ! "

That a man in this blessed nineteenth century should be such a Vandal ! and that my Uncle Roland should talk in a strain that Totila would have been ashamed of, within so short a time after my father's scientific and erudite oration on the Hygeiana of Books, was enough to make one despair of the progress of intellect and the perfectibility of our species. And I have no manner of doubt that, all the while, my uncle had a brace of books in his pockets, Robert Hall one of them ! In truth, he had talked himself into a passion, and did

not know what nonsense he was saying. But this explosion of Captain Roland's has shattered the thread of my matter. Pouff ! I must take breath and begin again !

Yes, in spite of my sauciness, the old soldier evidently took to me more and more. And, besides our critical examination of the property and the pedigree, he carried me with him on long excursions to distant villages, where some memorial of a defunct Caxton, a coat of arms, or an epitaph on a tombstone, might be still seen. And he made me pore over topographical works and county histories (forgetful, Goth that he was, that for those very authorities he was indebted to the repudiated printer !) to find some anecdote of his beloved dead ! In truth, the county for miles round bore the *vestigia* of those old Caxtons ; their handwriting was on many a broken wall. And, obscure as they all were, compared to that great operative of the Sanctuary at Westminster, whom my father clung to —still, that the yesterdays that had lighted them the way to dusty death had cast no glare on dishonoured scutcheons seemed clear, from the popular respect and traditional affection in which I found that the name was still held in hamlet and homestead. It was pleasant to see the veneration with which this small hidalgo of some three hundred a-year was held, and the patriarchal affection with which he returned it. Roland was a man who would walk into a cottage, rest his cork-leg on the hearth, and talk for the hour together upon all that lay nearest to the hearts of the owners.

There is a peculiar spirit of aristocracy amongst agricultural peasants: they like old names and families; they identify themselves with the honours of a house, as if of its clan. They do not care so much for wealth as townsfolk and the middle class do; they have a pity, but a respectful one, for well-born poverty. And then this Roland, too—who would go and dine in a cook-shop, and receive change for a shilling, and shun the ruinous luxury of a hack cabriolet—could be positively extravagant in his liberalities to those around him. He was altogether another being in his paternal acres. The shabby-genteel, half-pay captain, lost in the whirl of London, here luxuriated into a dignified ease of manner that Chesterfield might have admired. And if to please is the true sign of politeness, I wish you could have seen the faces that smiled upon Captain Roland, as he walked down the village, nodding from side to side.

One day a frank, hearty, old woman, who had known Roland as a boy, seeing him lean on my arm, stopped us, as she said bluffly, to take a "geud luik" at me.

Fortunately I was stalwart enough to pass muster, even in the eyes of a Cumberland matron; and after a compliment at which Roland seemed much pleased, she said to me, but pointing to the Captain—

"Hegh, sir, now you ha the bra time before you; you maun een try an be as geud as *he*. And if life last, ye wull too—for there never waur a bad ane of that stock. Wi' heads kindly stup'd to the least, and lifted

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manfu' oop to the heighest—that ye all war' sin ye came from the Ark. Blessins on the ould name—though little pelf goes with it, it sounds on the peur man's ear like a bit of gould!"

"Do you not see now," said Roland, as we turned away, "what we owe to a name, and what to our forefathers?—do you not see why the remotest ancestor has a right to our respect and consideration — for he was a parent? 'Honour your parents'—the law does not say, 'Honour your children.' If a child disgrace us, and the dead, and the sanctity of this great heritage of their virtues — *the name;* — if he does—" Roland stopped short, and added fervently, "But you are my heir now—I have no fear! What matter one foolish old man's sorrows?—the name, that property of generations, is saved, thank Heaven—the name!"

Now the riddle was solved, and I understood why, amidst all his natural grief for a son's loss, that proud father was consoled. For he was less himself a father than a son—son to the long dead. From every grave where a progenitor slept, he had heard a parent's voice. He could bear to be bereaved, if the forefathers were not dishonoured. Roland was more than half a Roman —the son might still cling to his household affections, but the *lares* were a part of his religion.

CHAPTER V.

But I ought to be hard at work, preparing myself for Cambridge. The deuce!—how can I? The point in academical education on which I require most preparation is Greek composition. I come to my father, who, one might think, was at home enough in this. But rare indeed is it to find a great scholar who is a good teacher.

My dear father! if one is content to take you in your own way, there never was a more admirable instructor for the heart, the head, the principles, or the taste—when you have discovered that there is some one sore to be healed—one defect to be repaired: and you have rubbed your spectacles, and got your hand fairly into that recess between your frill and your waistcoat. But to go to you, cut and dry, monotonously, regularly—book and exercise in hand—to see the mournful patience with which you tear yourself from that great volume of Cardan in the very honeymoon of possession—and then to note those mild eyebrows gradually distend themselves into perplexed diagonals, over some false quantity or some barbarous collocation—till there steal forth that horrible "Papæ!"

which means more on your lips than I am sure it ever did when Latin was a live language, and "Papæ!" a natural and unpedantic ejaculation! — no, I would sooner blunder through the dark by myself a thousand times than light my rushlight at the lamp of that Phlegethonian "Papæ!"

And then my father would wisely and kindly, but wondrous slowly, erase three-fourths of one's pet verses, and intercalate others that one saw were exquisite, but could not exactly see why. And then one asked why; and my father shook his head in despair, and said— "But you ought to *feel* why!"

In short, scholarship to him was like poetry: he could no more teach it you than Pindar could have taught you how to make an ode. You breathed the aroma, but you could no more seize and analyse it, than, with the opening of your naked hand, you could carry off the scent of a rose. I soon left my father in peace to Cardan, and to the Great Book, which last, by the way, advanced but slowly. For Uncle Jack had now insisted on its being published in quarto, with illustrative plates; and those plates took an immense time, and were to cost an immense sum—but that cost was the affair of the Anti-Publisher Society. But how can I settle to work by myself? No sooner have I got into my room—*penitus ab orbe divisus*, as I rashly think —than there is a tap at the door. Now it is my mother, who is benevolently engaged upon making curtains to all the windows (a trifling superfluity that Bolt had forgotten or disdained), and who wants to know how

the draperies are fashioned at Mr Trevanion's : a pretence to have me near her, and see with her own eyes that I am not fretting ; the moment she hears I have shut myself up in my room, she is sure that it is for sorrow. Now it is Bolt, who is making book-shelves for my father, and desires to consult me at every turn, especially as I have given him a Gothic design, which pleases him hugely. Now it is Blanche, whom, in an evil hour, I undertook to teach to draw, and who comes in on tiptoe, vowing she'll not disturb me, and sits so quiet that she fidgets me out of all patience. Now, and much more often, it is the Captain, who wants me to walk, to ride, to fish. And, by St Hubert ! (saint of the chase) bright August comes—and there is moor-game on those barren wolds—and my uncle has given me the gun he shot with at my age—single-barrelled, flint lock—but you would not have laughed at it if you had seen the strange feats it did in Roland's hands—while in mine, I could always lay the blame on the flint lock ! Time, in short, passed rapidly ; and if Roland and I had our dark hours, we chased them away before they could settle—shot them on the wing as they got up.

Then, too, though the immediate scenery around my uncle's was so bleak and desolate, the country within a few miles was so full of objects of interest—of landscapes so poetically grand or lovely ; and occasionally we coaxed my father from the Cardan, and spent whole days by the margin of some glorious lake.

Amongst these excursions, I made one by myself to

that house in which my father had known the bliss and the pangs of that stern first-love which still left its scars fresh on my own memory. The house, large and imposing, was shut up—the Trevanions had not been there for years—the pleasure-grounds had been contracted into the smallest possible space. There was no positive decay or ruin—that Trevanion would never have allowed; but there was the dreary look of absenteeship everywhere. I penetrated into the house with the help of my card and half-a-crown. I saw that memorable boudoir—I could fancy the very spot in which my father had heard the sentence that had changed the current of his life. And when I returned home, I looked with new tenderness on my father's placid brow—and blessed anew that tender helpmate, who, in her patient love, had chased from it every shadow.

I had received one letter from Vivian a few days after our arrival. It had been re-directed from my father's house, at which I had given him my address. It was short, but seemed cheerful. He said, that he believed he had at last hit on the right way, and should keep to it—that he and the world were better friends than they had been—that the only way to keep friends with the world was to treat it as a tamed tiger, and have one hand on a crowbar while one fondled the beast with the other. He enclosed me a bank-note, which somewhat more than covered his debt to me, and bade me pay him the surplus when he should claim it as a millionaire. He gave me no address in his letter, but it bore the post-mark of Godalming. I

had the impertinent curiosity to look into an old topographical work upon Surrey, and in a supplemental itinerary I found this passage: "To the left of the beech-wood, three miles from Godalming, you catch a glimpse of the elegant seat of Francis Vivian, Esq." To judge by the date of the work, the said Francis Vivian might be the grandfather of my friend, his namesake. There could no longer be any doubt as to the parentage of this prodigal son.

The long vacation was now nearly over, and all his guests were to leave the poor Captain. In fact, we had made a considerable trespass on his hospitality. It was settled that I was to accompany my father and mother to their long-neglected *penates*, and start thence for Cambridge.

Our parting was sorrowful — even Mrs Primmins wept as she shook hands with Bolt. But Bolt, an old soldier, was of course a lady's man. The brothers did not shake hands only — they fondly embraced, as brothers of that time of life rarely do nowadays, except on the stage. And Blanche, with one arm round my mother's neck and one round mine, sobbed in my ear,—"But I will be your little wife, I will." Finally, the fly-coach once more received us all—all but poor Blanche, and we looked round and missed her.

CHAPTER VI.

Alma Mater! Alma Mater! New-fashioned folks, with their large theories of education, may find fault with thee. But a true Spartan mother thou art—hard and stern as the old matron who bricked up her son Pausanias, bringing the first stone to immure him; hard and stern, I say, to the worthless, but full of majestic tenderness to the worthy.

For a young man to go up to Cambridge (I say nothing of Oxford, knowing nothing thereof) merely as routine work, to lounge through three years to a degree among the οἱ πολλοί—for such an one, Oxford Street herself, whom the immortal Opium-Eater hath so direly apostrophised, is not a more careless and stony-hearted mother. But for him who will read, who will work, who will seize the rare advantages proffered, who will select his friends judiciously—yea, out of that vast ferment of young idea in its lusty vigour, choose the good and reject the bad—there is plenty to make those three years rich with fruit imperishable—three years nobly spent, even though one must pass over the Ass's Bridge to get into the Temple of Honour.

Important changes in the Academical system have been recently announced, and honours are henceforth to be accorded to the successful disciples in moral and natural sciences. By the side of the old throne of Mathesis, they have placed two very useful *fauteuils à la Voltaire.* I have no objection; but, in those three years of life, it is not so much the thing learned, as the steady perseverance in learning something that is excellent.

It was fortunate, in one respect, for me that I had seen a little of the real world—the metropolitan—before I came to that mimic one, the cloistral. For what were called pleasures in the last, and which might have allured me, had I come fresh from school, had no charm for me now. Hard drinking and high play, a certain mixture of coarseness and extravagance, made the fashion among the idle when I was at the university, *consule Planco*—when Wordsworth was master of Trinity: it may be altered now.

But I had already outlived such temptations, and so, naturally, I was thrown out of the society of the idle, and somewhat into that of the laborious.

Still, to speak frankly, I had no longer the old pleasure in books. If my acquaintance with the great world had destroyed the temptation to puerile excesses, it had also increased my constitutional tendency to practical action. And alas! in spite of all the benefit I had derived from Robert Hall, there were times when memory was so poignant that I had no choice but to rush from the lonely room haunted by tempting phantoms too

dangerously fair, and sober down the fever of the heart by some violent bodily fatigue. The ardour which belongs to early youth, and which it best dedicates to knowledge, had been charmed prematurely to shrines less severely sacred. Therefore, though I laboured, it was with that full *sense of labour* which (as I found at a much later period of life) the truly triumphant student never knows. Learning—that marble image—warms into life, not at the toil of the chisel, but the worship of the sculptor. The mechanical workman finds but the voiceless stone.

At my uncle's, such a thing as a newspaper rarely made its appearance. At Cambridge, even among reading men, the newspapers had their due importance. Politics ran high; and I had not been three days at Cambridge before I heard Trevanion's name. Newspapers, therefore, had their charms for me. Trevanion's prophecy about himself seemed about to be fulfilled. There were rumours of changes in the Cabinet. Trevanion's name was bandied to and fro, struck from praise to blame, high and low, as a shuttlecock. Still the changes were not made, and the Cabinet held firm. Not a word in the *Morning Post*, under the head of *Fashionable Intelligence*, as to rumours that would have agitated me more than the rise and fall of governments—no hint of "the speedy nuptials of the daughter and sole heiress of a distinguished and wealthy commoner:" only now and then, in enumerating the circle of brilliant guests at the house of some party chief, I

gulped back the heart that rushed to my lips, when I saw the names of Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion.

But amongst all that prolific progeny of the periodical press—remote offspring of my great namesake and ancestor (for I hold the faith of my father)—where was the *Literary Times?*—what had so long retarded its promised blossoms? Not a leaf in the shape of advertisements had yet emerged from its mother earth. I hoped from my heart that the whole thing was abandoned, and would not mention it in my letters home, lest I should revive the mere idea of it. But, in default of the *Literary Times*, there did appear a new journal, a daily journal, too, a tall, slender, and meagre stripling, with a vast head, by way of prospectus, which protruded itself for three weeks successively at the top of the leading article;—with a fine and subtle body of paragraphs;—and the smallest legs, in the way of advertisements, that any poor newspaper ever stood upon! And yet this attenuated journal had a plump and plethoric title, a title that smacked of turtle and venison; an aldermanic, portly, grandiose, Falstaffian title—it was called THE CAPITALIST. And all those fine subtle paragraphs were larded out with recipes how to make money. There was an El Dorado in every sentence. To believe that Paper, you would think no man had ever yet found a proper return for his pounds, shillings, and pence. You would turn up your nose at twenty per cent. There was a great deal about Ireland—not her wrongs, thank Heaven! but her fisheries: a long

inquiry what had become of the pearls for which Britain was once so famous: a learned disquisition upon certain lost gold-mines now happily re-discovered; a very ingenious proposition to turn London smoke into manure, by a new chemical process: recommendations to the poor to hatch chickens in ovens like the ancient Egyptians: agricultural schemes for sowing the waste lands in England with onions, upon the system adopted near Bedford—net produce one hundred pounds an acre. In short, according to that paper, every rood of ground might well maintain its man, and every shilling be like Hobson's money-bag, "the fruitful parent of a hundred more." For three days, at the newspaper room of the Union Club, men talked of this journal; some pished, some sneered, some wondered: till an ill-natured mathematician, who had just taken his degree, and had spare time on his hands, sent a long letter to the *Morning Chronicle* showing up more blunders, in some article to which the editor of *The Capitalist* had specially invited attention, than would have paved the whole island of Laputa. After that time, not a soul read *The Capitalist.* How long it dragged on its existence I know not; but it certainly did not die of a *maladie de langueur.*

Little thought I, when I joined in the laugh against *The Capitalist,* that I ought rather to have followed it to its grave, in black crape and weepers,—unfeeling wretch that I was! But, like a poet, O *Capitalist!* thou wert not discovered, and appreciated, and prized, and

mourned, till thou wert dead and buried, and the bill came in for thy monument!

The first term of my college life was just expiring, when I received a letter from my mother, so agitated, so alarming—at first reading so unintelligible—that I could only see that some great misfortune had befallen us; and I stopped short and dropped on my knees to pray for the life and health of those whom that misfortune more specially seemed to menace; and then—and then, towards the end of the last blurred sentence, read twice, thrice over—I could cry, "Thank Heaven, thank Heaven! it is only, then, money after all!"

PART ELEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.

The next day, on the outside of the Cambridge Telegraph, there was one passenger who ought to have impressed his fellow-travellers with a very respectful idea of his lore in the dead languages; for not a single syllable, in a live one, did he vouchsafe to utter from the moment he ascended that "bad eminence," to the moment in which he regained his mother earth. "Sleep," says honest Sancho, "covers a man better than a cloak." I am ashamed of thee, honest Sancho! thou art a sad plagiarist; for Tibullus said pretty nearly the same thing before thee,—

"Te somnus fusco velavit amictu." *

But is not silence as good a cloak as sleep?—does it not wrap a man round with as offuse and impervious a fold? Silence—what a world it covers!—what busy schemes—what bright hopes and dark fears—what

* Tibullus, iii. 4, 55.

ambition, or what despair ! Do you ever see a man in any society sitting mute for hours, and not feel an uneasy curiosity to penetrate the wall he thus builds up between others and himself? Does he not interest you far more than the brilliant talker at your left—the airy wit at your right, whose shafts fall in vain on the sullen barrier of the silent man ! Silence, dark sister of Nox and Erebus, how, layer upon layer, shadow upon shadow, blackness upon blackness, thou stretchest thyself from hell to heaven, over thy two chosen haunts—man's heart and the grave !

So, then, wrapped in my greatcoat and my silence, I performed my journey ; and on the evening of the second day I reached the old-fashioned brick house. How shrill on my ears sounded the bell ! How strange and ominous to my impatience seemed the light gleaming across the windows of the hall ! How my heart beat as I watched the face of the servant who opened the gate to my summons !

" All well ? " cried I.

" All well, sir," answered the servant cheerfully. " Mr Squills, indeed, is with master, but I don't think there is anything the matter."

But now my mother appeared at the threshold, and I was in her arms.

" Sisty, Sisty !—my dear, dear son !—beggared, perhaps—and my fault—mine."

" Yours !—come into this room, out of hearing—your fault ? "

" Yes—yes !—for if I had had no brother, or if I had

not been led away,—If I had, as I ought, entreated poor Austin not to"—

"My dear, dearest mother, *you* accuse yourself for what, it seems, was my uncle's misfortune—I am sure not even his fault! (I made a gulp *there.*) No, lay the fault on the right shoulders—the defunct shoulders of that horrible progenitor, William Caxton, the printer, for, though I don't yet know the particulars of what has happened, I will lay a wager it is connected with that fatal invention of printing. Come, come—my father is well, is he not?"

"Yes, thank Heaven."

"And I too, and Roland, and little Blanche! Why, then, you are right to thank Heaven, for your true treasures are untouched. But sit down and explain, pray."

"I cannot explain. I do not understand anything more than that he, my brother,—mine!—has involved Austin in—in"—(a fresh burst of tears).

I comforted, scolded, laughed, preached, and adjured in a breath; and then, drawing my mother gently on, entered my father's study.

At the table was seated Mr Squills, pen in hand, and a glass of his favourite punch by his side. My father was standing on the hearth, a shade more pale, but with a resolute expression on his countenance, which was new to its indolent thoughtful mildness. He lifted his eyes as the door opened, and then, putting his finger to his lips, as he glanced towards my mother, he said gaily,

"No great harm done. Don't believe her! Women always exaggerate, and make realities of their own bugbears: it is the vice of their lively imaginations, as Wierus has clearly shown in accounting for the marks, moles, and hare-lips which they inflict upon their innocent infants before they are even born. My dear boy," added my father, as I here kissed him and smiled in his face, "I thank you for that smile! God bless you!" He wrung my hand, and turned a little aside.

"It is a great comfort," renewed my father, after a short pause, "to know, when a misfortune happens, that it could not be helped. Squills has just discovered that I have no bump of cautiousness; so that, craniologically speaking, if I had escaped one imprudence I should certainly have run my head against another."

"A man with your development is made to be taken in," said Mr Squills, consolingly.

"Do you hear that, my own Kitty? and have you the heart to blame Jack any longer—a poor creature cursed with a bump that would take in the Stock Exchange? And can any one resist his bump, Squills?"

"Impossible!" said the surgeon authoritatively.

"Sooner or later it must involve him in its airy meshes—eh, Squills, entrap him into its fatal cerebral cell. There his fate waits him, like the ant-lion in its pit."

"Too true," quoth Squills. "What a phrenological lecturer you would have made!"

"Go then, my love," said my father, "and lay no blame but on this melancholy cavity of mine, where

cautiousness—is not! Go, and let Sisty have some supper; for Squills says that he has a fine development of the mathematical organs, and we want his help. We are hard at work on figures, Pisistratus."

My mother looked broken-hearted, and, obeying submissively, stole to the door without a word. But as she reached the threshold she turned round, and beckoned to me to follow her.

I whispered my father and went out. My mother was standing in the hall, and I saw by the lamp that she had dried her tears, and that her face, though very sad, was more composed.

"Sisty," she said, in a low voice which struggled to be firm, "promise me that you will tell me all—the worst, Sisty. They keep it from me, and that is my hardest punishment; for when I don't know all that he—that Austin suffers, it seems to me as if I had lost his heart. Oh, Sisty! my child, my child, don't fear me! I shall be happy whatever befalls us, if I once get back my privilege—my privilege, Sisty, to comfort, to share!—do you understand me?"

"Yes, indeed, my mother! And with your good sense, and clear woman's wit, if you will but feel how much we want them, you will be the best counsellor we could have. So never fear; you and I will have no secrets."

My mother kissed me, and went away with a less heavy step.

As I re-entered, my father came across the room and embraced me.

"My son," he said, in a faltering voice, "if your modest prospects in life are ruined"—

"Father, father, can you think of me at such a moment! Me! Is it possible to ruin the young, and strong, and healthy! Ruin me, with these thews and sinews!—ruin me, with the education you have given me—thews and sinews of the mind! Oh no! there, Fortune is harmless! And you forget, sir,—the saffron bag!"

Squills leapt up, and, wiping his eyes with one hand, gave me a sounding slap on the shoulder with the other.

"I am proud of the care I took of your infancy, Master Caxton. That comes of strengthening the digestive organs in early childhood. Such sentiments are a proof of magnificent ganglions in a perfect state of order. When a man's tongue is as smooth as I am sure yours is, he slips through misfortune like an eel."

I laughed outright, my father smiled faintly; and, seating myself, I drew towards me a paper filled with Squills' memoranda, and said, "Now to find the unknown quantity. What on earth is this? 'Supposed value of books, £750.' Oh, father! this is impossible. I was prepared for anything but that. Your books—they are your life!"

"Nay," said my father; "after all, they are the offending party in this case, and so ought to be the principal victims. Besides, I believe I know most of them by heart. But, in truth, we are only entering

all our effects, to be sure (added my father proudly) that, come what may, we are not dishonoured."

"Humour him," whispered Squills; "we will save the books." Then he added aloud, as he laid finger and thumb on my pulse, "One, two, three, about seventy—capital pulse—soft and full—he can bear the whole: let us administer it."

My father nodded—"Certainly. But, Pisistratus, we must manage your dear mother. Why she should think of blaming herself, because poor Jack took wrong ways to enrich us, I cannot understand. But as I have had occasion before to remark, Sphinx is a noun feminine."

My poor father! that was a vain struggle for thy wonted innocent humour. The lips quivered.

Then the story came out. It seems that, when it was resolved to undertake the publication of the *Literary Times*, a certain number of shareholders had been got together by the indefatigable energies of Uncle Jack; and in the deed of association and partnership, my father's name figured conspicuously as the holder of a fourth of this joint property. If in this my father had committed some imprudence, he had at least done nothing that, according to the ordinary calculations of a secluded student, could become ruinous. But, just at the time when we were in the hurry of leaving town, Jack had represented to my father that it might be necessary to alter a little the plan of the paper; and, in order to allure a larger circle of readers, touch somewhat on the more vulgar news and interests of the

day. A change of plan might involve a change of title; and he suggested to my father the expediency of leaving the smooth hands of Mr Tibbets altogether unfettered, as to the technical name and precise form of the publication. To this my father had unwittingly assented, on hearing that the other shareholders would do the same. Mr Peck, a printer of considerable opulence, and highly respectable name, had been found to advance the sum necessary for the publication of the earlier numbers, upon the guarantee of the said act of partnership and the additional security of my father's signature to a document, authorising Mr Tibbets to make any change in the form or title of the periodical that might be judged advisable, concurrent with the consent of the other shareholders.

Now, it seems that Mr Peck had, in his previous conferences with Mr Tibbets, thrown much cold water on the idea of the *Literary Times*, and had suggested something that should "catch the monied public,"—the fact being, as was afterwards discovered, that the printer, whose spirit of enterprise was congenial to Uncle Jack's, had shares in three or four speculations, to which he was naturally glad of an opportunity to invite the attention of the public. In a word, no sooner was my poor father's back turned, than the *Literary Times* was dropped incontinently, and Mr Peck and Mr Tibbets began to concentrate their luminous notions into that brilliant and comet-like apparition which ultimately blazed forth under the title of *The Capitalist.*

From this change of enterprise the more prudent and responsible of the original shareholders had altogether withdrawn. A majority, indeed, were left; but the greater part of those were shareholders of that kind most amenable to the influences of Uncle Jack, and willing to be shareholders in anything, since as yet they were possessors of nothing.

Assured of my father's responsibility, the adventurous Peck put plenty of spirit into the first launch of *The Capitalist*. All the walls were placarded with its announcements; circular advertisements ran from one end of the kingdom to the other. Agents were engaged, correspondents levied *en masse*. The invasion of Xerxes on the Greeks was not more munificently provided for than that of *The Capitalist* upon the credulity and avarice of mankind.

But as Providence bestows upon fishes the instrument of fins, whereby they balance and direct their movements, however rapid and erratic, through the pathless deeps; so to the cold-blooded creatures of our own species—that may be classed under the genus MONEY-MAKERS—the same protective power accords the fin-like properties of prudence and caution, wherewith your true money-getter buoys and guides himself majestically through the great seas of speculation. In short, the fishes the net was cast for were all scared from the surface at the first splash. They came round and smelt at the mesh with their sharp bottle-noses, and then, plying those invaluable fins, made off as fast as they could—plunging into the mud—hiding them-

selves under rocks and coral banks. Metaphor apart, the capitalists buttoned up their pockets, and would have nothing to say to their namesake.

Not a word of this change, so abhorrent to all the notions of poor Augustine Caxton, had been breathed to him by Peck or Tibbets. He ate, and slept, and worked at the Great Book, occasionally wondering why he had not heard of the advent of the *Literary Times*, unconscious of all the awful responsibilities which *The Capitalist* was entailing on him ;—knowing no more of *The Capitalist* than he did of the last loan of the Rothschilds.

Difficult was it for all other human nature, save my father's, not to breathe an indignant anathema on the scheming head of the brother-in-law who had thus violated the most sacred obligations of trust and kindred, and so entangled an unsuspecting recluse. But, to give even Jack Tibbets his due, he had firmly convinced himself that *The Capitalist* would make my father's fortune ; and if he did not announce to him the strange and anomalous development into which the original sleeping chrysalis of the *Literary Times* had taken portentous wing, it was purely and wholly in the knowledge that my father's "prejudices," as he termed them, would stand in the way of his becoming a Crœsus. And, in fact, Uncle Jack had believed so heartily in his own project, that he had put himself thoroughly into Mr Peck's power, signed bills, in his own name, to some fabulous amount, and was actually now in the Fleet, whence his penitential and despair-

ing confession was dated, arriving simultaneously with a short letter from Mr Peck, wherein that respectable printer apprised my father that he had continued, at his own risk, the publication of *The Capitalist*, as far as a prudent care for his family would permit; that he need not say that a new daily journal was a very vast experiment; that the expense of such a paper as *The Capitalist* was immeasurably greater than that of a mere literary periodical, as originally suggested; and that now, being constrained to come upon the shareholders for the sums he had advanced, amounting to several thousands, he requested my father to settle with him immediately—delicately implying that Mr Caxton himself might settle as he could with the other shareholders, most of whom, he grieved to add, he had been misled by Mr Tibbets into believing to be men of substance, when in reality they were men of straw!

Nor was this all the evil. The "Great Anti-Bookseller Publishing Society"—which had maintained a struggling existence — evinced by advertisements of sundry forthcoming works of solid interest and enduring nature, wherein, out of a long list, amidst a pompous array of "Poems," "Dramas not intended for the Stage," "Essays by Phileutheros, Philanthropos, Philopolis, Philodemus, and Philalethes," stood prominently forth, "The History of Human Error, Vols. I. and II., quarto, with illustrations,"—the "Anti-Bookseller Society," I say, that had hitherto evinced nascent and budding life by these exfoliations from its slender stem, died of a sudden blight, the moment its sun, in

the shape of Uncle Jack, set in the Cimmerian regions of the Fleet; and a polite letter from another printer (O William Caxton, William Caxton!—fatal progenitor!), informing my father of this event, stated complimentarily that it was to him, "as the most respectable member of the Association," that the said printer would be compelled to look for expenses incurred, not only in the very costly edition of the "History of Human Error," but for those incurred in the print and paper devoted to "Poems," "Dramas not intended for the Stage," "Essays by Phileutheros, Philanthropos, Philopolis, Philodemus, and Philalethes," with sundry other works, no doubt of a very valuable nature, but in which a considerable loss, in a pecuniary point of view, must be necessarily expected.

I own that, as soon as I had mastered the above agreeable facts, and ascertained from Mr Squills that my father really did seem to have rendered himself legally liable to these demands, I leant back in my chair, stunned and bewildered.

"So you see," said my father, "that as yet we are contending with monsters in the dark—in the dark all monsters look larger and uglier. Even Augustus Cæsar, though certainly he had never scrupled to make as many ghosts as suited his convenience, did not like the chance of a visit from them, and never sat alone *in tenebris*. What the amount of the sums claimed from me may be, we know not; what may be gained by the other shareholders is equally obscure and undefined. But the first thing to do is to get poor Jack out of prison."

"Uncle Jack out of prison!" exclaimed I: "surely, sir, that is carrying forgiveness too far."

"Why, he would not have been in prison if I had not been so blindly forgetful of his weakness, poor man! I ought to have known better. But my vanity misled me; I must needs publish a great book, as if (said Mr Caxton, looking round the shelves) there were not great books enough in the world! I must needs, too, think of advancing and circulating knowledge in the form of a journal—I, who had not knowledge enough of the character of my own brother-in-law to keep myself from ruin! Come what will, I should think myself the meanest of men to let that poor creature, whom I ought to have considered as a monomaniac, rot in prison, because I, Austin Caxton, wanted common sense. And (concluded my father, resolutely) he is your mother's brother, Pisistratus. I should have gone to town at once; but, hearing that my wife had written to you, I waited till I could leave her to the companionship of hope and comfort—two blessings that smile upon every mother in the face of a son like you. To-morrow I go."

"Not a bit of it," said Mr Squills firmly; "as your medical adviser, I forbid you to leave the house for the next six days."

CHAPTER II.

"Sir," continued Mr Squills, biting off the end of a cigar which he pulled from his pocket, "you concede to me that it is a very important business on which you propose to go to London."

"Of that there is no doubt," replied my father.

"And the doing of business well or ill entirely depends upon the habit of body!" cried Mr Squills triumphantly. "Do you know, Mr Caxton, that while you are looking so calm, and talking so quietly—just on purpose to sustain your son and delude your wife—do you know that your pulse, which is naturally little more than sixty, is nearly a hundred? Do you know, sir, that your mucous membranes are in a state of high irritation, apparent by the *papillæ* at the tip of your tongue? And if, with a pulse like this, and a tongue like that, you think of settling money matters with a set of sharp-witted tradesmen, all I can say is, that you are a ruined man."

"But"—began my father.

"Did not Squire Rollick," pursued Mr Squills—"Squire Rollick, the hardest head at a bargain I know of—did not Squire Rollick sell that pretty little farm

of his, Scranny Holt, for thirty per cent below its value? And what was the cause, sir?—the whole country was in amaze!—what was the cause, but an incipient simmering attack of the yellow jaundice, which made him take a gloomy view of human life, and the agricultural interest? On the other hand, did not Lawyer Cool, the most prudent man in the three kingdoms—Lawyer Cool, who was so methodical, that all the clocks in the county were set by his watch—plunge one morning head over heels into a frantic speculation for cultivating the bogs in Ireland (his watch did not go right for the next three months, which made our whole shire an hour in advance of the rest of England!) And what was the cause of that nobody knew, till I was called in, and found the cerebral membrane in a state of acute irritation, probably just in the region of his acquisitiveness and ideality. No, Mr Caxton, you will stay at home, and take a soothing preparation I shall send you, of lettuce-leaves and marsh-mallows. But I," continued Squills, lighting his cigar, and taking two determined whiffs—"but *I* will go up to town and settle the business for you, and take with me this young gentleman, whose digestive functions are just in a state to deal safely with those horrible elements of dyspepsia—the L. S. D."

As he spoke, Mr Squills set his foot significantly upon mine.

"But," resumed my father mildly, "though I thank you very much, Squills, for your kind offer, I do not recognise the necessity of accepting it. I am not so

bad a philosopher as you seem to imagine; and the blow I have received has not so deranged my physical organisation as to render me unfit to transact my affairs."

"Hum!" grunted Squills, starting up and seizing my father's pulse; "ninety-six—ninety-six if a beat! And the tongue, sir!"

"Pshaw!" quoth my father, "you have not even seen my tongue!"

"No need of that, I know what it is by the state of the eyelids—tip scarlet, sides rough as a nutmeg-grater!"

"Pshaw!" again said my father, this time impatiently.

"Well," said Squills solemnly, "it is my duty to say (here my mother entered, to tell me that supper was ready), and I say it to you, Mrs Caxton, and to you, Mr Pisistratus Caxton, as the parties most nearly interested, that if you, sir, go to London upon this matter, I'll not answer for the consequences."

"Oh! Austin, Austin," cried my mother, running up and throwing her arms round my father's neck; while I, little less alarmed by Squills' serious tone and aspect, represented strongly the inutility of Mr Caxton's personal interference at the present moment. All he could do on arriving in town would be to put the matter into the hands of a good lawyer, and that we could do for him; it would be time enough to send for him when the extent of the mischief done was more clearly ascertained. Meanwhile Squills griped my father's pulse, and my mother hung on his neck.

"Ninety-six—ninety-seven!" groaned Squills in a hollow voice.

"I don't believe it!" cried my father, almost in a passion—"never better nor cooler in my life."

"And the tongue—look at his tongue, Mrs Caxton—a tongue, ma'am, so bright that you could see to read by it!"

"Oh! Austin, Austin!"

"My dear, it is not my tongue that is in fault, I assure you," said my father, speaking through his teeth; "and the man knows no more of my tongue than he does of the Mysteries of Eleusis."

"Put it out then," exclaimed Squills, "and if he be not as I say, you have my leave to go to London, and throw your whole fortune into the two great pits you have dug for it. Put it out!"

"Mr Squills!" said my father, colouring—"Mr Squills, for shame!"

"Dear, dear Austin! your hand is so hot—you are feverish, I am sure."

"Not a bit of it."

"But, sir, only just gratify Mr Squills," said I coaxingly.

"There, there!" said my father, fairly baited into submission, and shyly exhibiting for a moment the extremest end of the vanquished organ of eloquence.

Squills darted forward his lynx-like eyes. "Red as a lobster, and rough as a gooseberry-bush!" cried Squills, in a tone of savage joy.

CHAPTER III.

How was it possible for one poor tongue, so reviled and persecuted, so humbled, insulted, and triumphed over, to resist three tongues in league against it?

Finally, my father yielded, and Squills, in high spirits, declared that he would go to supper with me, to see that I ate nothing that could tend to discredit his reliance on my system. Leaving my mother still with her Austin, the good surgeon then took my arm, and, as soon as we were in the next room, shut the door carefully, wiped his forehead, and said—"I think we have saved him!"

"Would it really, then, have injured my father so much?"

"So much!—why, you foolish young man, don't you see that, with his ignorance of business, where he himself is concerned—though for any other one's business, neither Rollick nor Cool has a better judgment—and with his d—d Quixotic spirit of honour worked up into a state of excitement, he would have rushed to Mr Tibbets, and exclaimed, 'How much do you owe? there it is!' settled in the same way with these printers, and come back without a sixpence; whereas

you and I can look coolly about us, and reduce the inflammation to the minimum!"

"I see, and thank you heartily Squills."

"Besides," said the surgeon, with more feeling, "your father has really been making a noble effort over himself. He suffers more than you would think—not for himself (for I do believe that, if he were alone in the world, he would be quite contented if he could save fifty pounds a-year and his books), but for your mother and yourself; and a fresh access of emotional excitement, all the nervous anxiety of a journey to London on such a business might have ended in a paralytic or epileptic affection. Now we have him here snug; and the worst news we can give him will be better than what he will make up his mind for. But you don't eat."

"Eat! How can I? My poor father!"

"The effect of grief upon the gastric juices, through the nervous system, is very remarkable," said Mr Squills, philosophically, and helping himself to a broiled bone; "it increases the thirst, while it takes away hunger. No — don't touch port! — heating! Sherry and water."

CHAPTER IV.

The house-door had closed upon Mr Squills—that gentleman having promised to breakfast with me the next morning, so that we might take the coach from our gate—and I remained alone, seated by the supper-table, and revolving all I had heard, when my father walked in.

"Pisistratus," said he gravely, and looking round him, "your mother!—suppose the worst—your first care then, must be to try and secure something for her. You and I are men—we can never want, while we have health of mind and body; but a woman—and if anything happens to me—"

My father's lip writhed as it uttered these brief sentences.

"My dear, dear father!" said I, suppressing my tears with difficulty, "all evils, as you yourself said, look worse by anticipation. It is impossible that your whole fortune can be involved. The newspaper did not run many weeks: and only the first volume of your work is printed. Besides, there must be other shareholders who will pay their quota. Believe me, I feel sanguine as to the result of my embassy. As for

my poor mother, it is not the loss of fortune that will wound her—depend on it, she thinks very little of that; it is the loss of your confidence."

"My confidence!"

"Ah, yes! tell her all your fears, as your hopes. Do not let your affectionate pity exclude her from one corner of your heart."

"It is that—it is *that*, Austin,—my husband—my joy—my pride—my soul—my all!" cried a soft broken voice.

My mother had crept in, unobserved by us.

My father looked at us both, and the tears which had before stood in his eyes forced their way. Then opening his arms, into which his Kitty threw herself joyfully—he lifted those moist eyes upward, and, by the movement of his lips, I saw that he thanked God.

I stole out of the room. I felt that those two hearts should be left to beat and to blend alone. And from that hour, I am convinced that Augustine Caxton acquired a stouter philosophy than that of the stoics. The fortitude that concealed pain was no longer needed, for the pain was no longer felt.

CHAPTER V.

Mr Squills and I performed our journey without adventure, and, as we were not alone on the coach, with little conversation. We put up at a small inn in the City, and the next morning I sallied forth to see Trevanion—for we agreed that he would be the best person to advise us. But, on arriving at St James's Square, I had the disappointment of hearing that the whole family had gone to Paris three days before, and were not expected to return till the meeting of Parliament.

This was a sad discouragement, for I had counted much on Trevanion's clear head, and that extraordinary range of accomplishment in all matters of business—all that related to practical life—which my old patron pre-eminently possessed. The next thing would be to find Trevanion's lawyer (for Trevanion was one of those men whose solicitors are sure to be able and active). But the fact was, that he left so little to lawyers, that he had never had occasion to communicate with one since I had known him; and I was therefore in ignorance of the very name of his solicitor; nor could the porter, who was left in charge of the

house, enlighten me. Luckily, I bethought myself of Sir Sedley Beaudesert, who could scarcely fail to give me the information required, and who, at all events, might recommend to me some other lawyer. So to him I went.

I found Sir Sedley at breakfast with a young gentleman who seemed about twenty. The good baronet was delighted to see me; but I thought it was with a little confusion, rare to his cordial ease, that he presented me to his cousin, Lord Castleton. It was a name familiar to me, though I had never before met its patrician owner.

The Marquess of Castleton was indeed a subject of envy to young idlers, and afforded a theme of interest to grey-beard politicians. Often had I heard of "that lucky fellow Castleton," who, when of age, would step into one of those colossal fortunes which would realise the dreams of Aladdin—a fortune that had been out to nurse since his minority. Often had I heard graver gossips wonder whether Castleton would take any active part in public life—whether he would keep up the family influence. His mother (still alive) was a superior woman, and had devoted herself, from his childhood, to supply a father's loss, and fit him for his great position. It was said that he was clever—had been educated by a tutor of great academic distinction, and was reading for a double first class at Oxford. This young marquess was indeed the head of one of those few houses still left in England that retain feudal importance. He was important, not only from his rank and his

vast fortune, but from an immense circle of powerful connections ; from the ability of his two predecessors, who had been keen politicians and cabinet-ministers ; from the *prestige* they had bequeathed to his name ; from the peculiar nature of his property, which gave him the returning interest in no less than six parliamentary seats in Great Britain and Ireland—besides the indirect ascendancy which the head of the Castletons had always exercised over many powerful and noble allies of that princely house. I was not aware that he was related to Sir Sedley, whose world of action was so remote from politics ; and it was with some surprise that I now heard that announcement, and certainly with some interest that I, perhaps from the verge of poverty, gazed on this young heir of fabulous El Dorados.

It was easy to see that Lord Castleton had been brought up with a careful knowledge of his future greatness, and its serious responsibilities. He stood immeasurably aloof from all the affectations common to the youth of minor patricians. He had not been taught to value himself on the cut of a coat, or the shape of a hat. His world was far above St James's Street and the clubs. He was dressed plainly, though in a style peculiar to himself—a white neckcloth (which was not at that day quite so uncommon for morning use as it is now), trousers without straps, thin shoes and gaiters. In his manner there was nothing of the supercilious apathy which characterises the dandy introduced to some one whom he doubts if he can nod to from the bow-window at White's—none of such vulgar coxcombries

had Lord Castleton; and yet a young gentleman more emphatically coxcomb it was impossible to see. He had been told, no doubt, that, as the head of a house which was almost in itself a party in the state, he should be bland and civil to all men; and this duty being grafted upon a nature singularly cold and unsocial, gave to his politeness something so stiff, yet so condescending, that it brought the blood to one's cheek—though the momentary anger was counterbalanced by a sense of the almost ludicrous contrast between this gracious majesty of deportment, and the insignificant figure, with the boyish beardless face, by which it was assumed. Lord Castleton did not content himself with a mere bow at our introduction. Much to my wonder how he came by the information he displayed, he made me a little speech after the manner of Louis XIV. to a provincial noble—studiously modelled upon that royal maxim of urbane policy which instructs a king that he should know something of the birth, parentage, and family, of his meanest gentleman. It was a little speech, in which my father's learning, and my uncle's services, and the amiable qualities of your humble servant, were neatly interwoven—delivered in a falsetto tone, as if learned by heart, though it must have been necessarily impromptu; and then, reseating himself, he made a gracious motion of the head and hand, as if to authorise me to do the same.

Conversation succeeded, by galvanic jerks and spasmodic starts—a conversation that Lord Castleton contrived to tug so completely out of poor Sir Sedley's

ordinary course of small and polished small-talk, that that charming personage, accustomed, as he well deserved, to be Coryphæus at his own table, was completely silenced. With his light reading, his rich stores of anecdote, his good-humoured knowledge of the drawing-room world, he had scarce a word that would fit into the great, rough, serious matters which Lord Castleton threw upon the table, as he nibbled his toast. Nothing but the most grave and practical subjects of human interest seemed to attract this future leader of mankind. The fact is, that Lord Castleton had been taught everything that relates to *property*—(a knowledge which embraces a very wide circumference). It had been said to him, "You will be an immense proprietor—knowledge is essential to your self-preservation. You will be puzzled, bubbled, ridiculed, duped every day of your life, if you do not make yourself acquainted with all by which property is assailed or defended, impoverished or increased. You have a vast stake in the country—you must learn all the interests of Europe—nay, of the civilised world—for those interests react on the country, and the interests of the country are of the greatest possible consequence to the interests of the Marquess of Castleton." Thus the state of the Continent—the policy of Metternich—the condition of the Papacy—the growth of Dissent—the proper mode of dealing with the general spirit of Democracy, which was the epidemic of European monarchies—the relative proportions of the agricultural and manufacturing population—corn-laws, currency, and

the laws that regulate wages—a criticism on the leading speakers of the House of Commons, with some discursive observations on the importance of fattening cattle —the introduction of flax into Ireland—emigration—the condition of the poor—the doctrines of Mr Owen —the pathology of potatoes; the connection between potatoes, pauperism, and patriotism; these, and such-like stupendous subjects for reflection—all branching more or less intricately from the single idea of the Castleton property—the young lord discussed and disposed of in half-a-dozen prim, poised sentences—evincing, I must say in justice, no inconsiderable information, and a mighty solemn turn of mind. The oddity was, that the subjects so selected and treated should not come rather from some young barrister, or mature political economist, than from so gorgeous a lily of the field. Of a man less elevated in rank one would certainly have said—"Cleverish, but a prig;" but there really was something so respectable in a personage born to such fortunes, and having nothing to do but to bask in the sunshine, voluntarily taking such pains with himself, and condescending to identify his own interests—the interests of the Castleton property—with the concerns of his lesser fellow-mortals, that one felt the young marquess had in him the stuff to become a very considerable man.

Poor Sir Sedley, to whom all these matters were as unfamiliar as the theology of the Talmud, after some vain efforts to slide the conversation into easier grooves,

fairly gave in, and, with a compassionate smile on his handsome countenance, took refuge in his easy-chair and the contemplation of his snuff-box.

At last, to our great relief, the servant announced Lord Castleton's carriage : and with another speech of overpowering affability to me, and a cold shake of the hand to Sir Sedley, Lord Castleton went his way.

The breakfast-parlour looked on the street, and I turned mechanically to the window as Sir Sedley followed his guest out of the room. A travelling carriage with four post-horses was at the door ; and a servant, who looked like a foreigner, was in waiting with his master's cloak. As I saw Lord Castleton step into the street, and wrap himself in his costly mantle lined with sables, I observed, more than I had while he was in the room, the enervate slightness of his frail form, and the more than paleness of his thin joyless face ; and then, instead of envy, I felt compassion for the owner of all this pomp and grandeur—felt that I would not have exchanged my hardy health, and easy humour, and vivid capacities of enjoyment in things the slightest and most within the reach of all men, for the wealth and greatness which that poor youth perhaps deserved the more for putting them so little to the service of pleasure.

"Well," said Sir Sedley, "and what do you think of him ?"

"He is just the sort of man Trevanion would like," said I, evasively.

"That is true," answered Sir Sedley, in a serious

tone of voice, and looking at me somewhat earnestly. "Have you heard?—but no, you cannot have heard yet."

"Heard what?"

"My dear young friend," said the kindest and most delicate of all fine gentlemen, sauntering away that he might not observe the emotion he caused, "Lord Castleton is going to Paris to join the Trevanions. The object Lady Ellinor has had at heart for many a long year is won, and our pretty Fanny will be Marchioness of Castleton when her betrothed is of age—that is, in six months. The two mothers have settled it all between them!"

I made no answer, but continued to look out of the window.

"This alliance," resumed Sir Sedley, "was all that was wanting to assure Trevanion's position. When parliament meets, he will have some great office. Poor man! how I shall pity him! It is extraordinary to me," continued Sir Sedley, benevolently going on, that I might have full time to recover myself, "how contagious that disease called 'business' is in our foggy England! Not only Trevanion, you see, has the complaint in its very worst and most complicated form, but that poor dear cousin of mine, who is so young (here Sir Sedley sighed), and might enjoy himself so much, is worse than you were when Trevanion was fagging you to death. But, to be sure, a great name and position, like Castleton's, must be a very heavy affliction to a conscientious mind. You see how the sense of its re-

sponsibilities has *aged* him already—positively, two great wrinkles under his eyes. Well, after all, I admire him, and respect his tutor; a soil naturally very thin, I suspect, has been most carefully cultivated; and Castleton, with Trevanion's help, will be the first man in the peerage—prime minister some day, I dare say. And when I think of it, how grateful I ought to feel to his father and mother, who produced him quite in their old age; for, if he had not been born, I should have been the most miserable of men—yes, positively, that horrible marquisate would have come to me! I never think over Horace Walpole's regrets, when he got the earldom of Orford, without the deepest sympathy, and without a shudder at the thought of what my dear Lady Castleton was kind enough to save me from—all owing to the Ems waters, after twenty years' marriage! Well, my young friend, and how are all at home?"

As when, some notable performer not having yet arrived behind the scenes, or having to change his dress, or not having yet quite recovered an unlucky extra tumbler of exciting fluids—and the green curtain has therefore unduly delayed its ascent—you perceive that the thorough-bass in the orchestra charitably devotes himself to a prelude of astonishing prolixity, calling in *Lodoiska* or *Der Freischutz* to beguile the time, and allow the procrastinating histrio leisure sufficient to draw on his flesh-coloured pantaloons, and give himself the proper complexion for a Coriolanus or Macbeth—even so had Sir Sedley made that long

speech, requiring no rejoinder, till he saw the time had arrived when he could artfully close with the flourish of a final interrogative, in order to give poor Pisistratus Caxton all preparation to compose himself and step forward. There is certainly something of exquisite kindness, and thoughtful benevolence, in that rarest of gifts,—*fine breeding;* and when now, re-manned and resolute, I turned round and saw Sir Sedley's soft blue eye shyly, but benignantly, turned to me—while, with a grace no other snuff-taker ever had since the days of Pope, he gently proceeded to refresh himself by a pinch of the celebrated Beaudesert mixture—I felt my heart as gratefully moved towards him as if he had conferred on me some colossal obligation. And this crowning question—"And how are all at home?" restored me entirely to my self-possession, and for the moment distracted the bitter current of my thoughts.

I replied by a brief statement of my father's involvement, disguising our apprehensions as to its extent, speaking of it rather as an annoyance than a possible cause of ruin, and ended by asking Sir Sedley to give me the address of Trevanion's lawyer.

The good baronet listened with great attention; and that quick penetration which belongs to a man of the world enabled him to detect, that I had smoothed over matters more than became a faithful narrator.

He shook his head, and seating himself on the sofa, motioned me to come to his side; then, leaning his arm over my shoulder, he said in his seductive, winning way—

"We two young fellows should understand each other when we talk of money matters. I can say to you what I could not say to my respectable senior—by three years; your excellent father. Frankly, then, I suspect this is a bad business. I know little about newspapers, except that I have to subscribe to one in my county, which costs me a small income; but I know that a London daily paper might ruin a man in a few weeks. And as for shareholders, my dear Caxton, I was once teased into being a shareholder in a canal that ran through my property, and ultimately ran off with £30,000 of it! The other shareholders were all drowned in the canal, like Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. But your father is a great scholar, and must not be plagued with such matters. I owe him a great deal. He was very kind to me at Cambridge, and gave me the taste for reading, to which I owe the pleasantest hours of my life. So, when you and the lawyers have found out what the extent of the mischief is, you and I must see how we can best settle it. What the deuce! my young friend—I have no 'encumbrances,' as the servants, with great want of politeness, call wives and children. And I am not a miserable great landed millionaire, like that poor dear Castleton, who owes so many duties to society that he can't spend a shilling, except in a grand way, and purely to benefit the public. So go, my boy, to Trevanion's lawyer: he is mine too. Clever fellow—sharp as a needle, Mr Pike, in Great Ormond Street—name on a brass plate; and when he has settled the amount, we young scape-

graces will help each other, without a word to the old folks."

What good it does to a man, throughout life, to meet kindness and generosity like this in his youth!

I need not say that I was too faithful a representative of my father's scholarly pride and susceptible independence of spirit, to accept this proposal; and probably Sir Sedley, rich and liberal as he was, did not dream of the extent to which his proposal might involve him. But I expressed my gratitude, so as to please and move this last relic of the De Coverleys, and went from his house straight to Mr Pike's office, with a little note of introduction from Sir Sedley. I found Mr Pike exactly the man I had anticipated from Trevanion's character—short, quick, intelligent, in question and answer; imposing, and somewhat domineering, in manner—not overcrowded with business, but with enough for experience and respectability; neither young nor old; neither a pedantic machine of parchment, nor a jaunty off-hand coxcomb of West End manners.

"It is an ugly affair," said he, "but one that requires management. Leave it all in my hands for three days. Don't go near Mr Tibbets, nor Mr Peck: and on Saturday next, at two o'clock, if you will call here, you shall know my opinion of the whole matter." With that, Mr Pike glanced at the clock, and I took up my hat and went.

There is no place more delightful than a great capital, if you are comfortably settled in it—have arranged the methodical disposal of your time, and know how to take

business and pleasure in due proportions. But a flying visit to a great capital, in an unsettled, unsatisfactory way—at an inn—an inn in the City, too—with a great worrying load of business on your mind, of which you are to hear no more of for three days ; and an aching, jealous, miserable sorrow at the heart, such as I had—leaving you no labour to pursue, and no pleasure that you have the heart to share in—oh, a great capital then is indeed forlorn, wearisome, and oppressive ! It is the Castle of Indolence, not as Thomson built it, but as Beckford drew in his Hall of Eblis—a wandering up and down, to and fro—a great awful space, with your hand pressed to your heart ; and—oh for a rush on some half-tame horse, through the measureless green wastes of Australia ! That is the place for a man who has no home in the Babel, and whose hand is ever pressing to his heart, with its dull, burning pain.

Mr Squills decoyed me the second evening into one of the small theatres ; and very heartily did Mr Squills enjoy all he saw, and all he heard. And while, with a convulsive effort of the jaws, I was trying to laugh too, suddenly in one of the actors, who was performing the worshipful part of a parish beadle, I recognised a face that I had seen before. Five minutes afterwards I had disappeared from the side of Squills, and was amidst that strange world—BEHIND THE SCENES.

My beadle was much too busy and important to allow me a good opportunity to accost him, till the piece was over. I then seized hold of him, as he was amicably sharing a pot of porter with a gentleman in black shorts

and a laced waistcoat, who was to play the part of a broken-hearted father in the Domestic Drama in Three Acts, that would conclude the amusements of the evening.

"Excuse me," said I apologetically; "but as the Swan pertinently observes,—'Should auld acquaintance be forgot?'"

"The Swan, sir!" cried the beadle aghast—"the Swan never demeaned himself by such d—d broad Scotch as that!"

"The Tweed has its Swans as well as the Avon, Mr Peacock."

"St—st—hush—hush—h—u—sh!" whispered the beadle in great alarm, and eyeing me, with savage observation, under his corked eyebrows. Then, taking me by the arm, he jerked me away. When he had got as far as the narrow limits of that little stage would allow, Mr Peacock said—

"Sir, you have the advantage of me; I don't remember you. Ah! you need not look!—by gad, sir, I am not to be bullied,—it was all fair play. If you will play with gentlemen, sir, you must run the consequences."

I hastened to appease the worthy man.

"Indeed, Mr Peacock, if you remember, I refused to play with you; and, so far from wishing to offend you, I now come on purpose to compliment you on your excellent acting, and to inquire if you have heard anything lately of your young friend Mr Vivian."

"Vivian?—never heard the name, sir. Vivian! Pooh, you are trying to hoax me; very good!"

"I assure you, Mr Peac—"

"St—st—How the deuce did you know that I was once called Peac—that is, people called me Peac—A friendly nickname, no more—drop it, sir, or you 'touch me with noble anger!'"

"Well, well; 'the rose by any name will smell as sweet,' as the Swan, this time at least judiciously, observes. But, Mr Vivian, too, seems to have other names at his disposal. I mean a young, dark, handsome man—or rather boy—with whom I met you in company by the roadside, one morning."

"O—h," said Mr Peacock, looking much relieved, "I know whom you mean, though I don't remember to have had the pleasure of seeing you before. No; I have not heard anything of the young man lately. I wish I did know something of him. He was a 'gentleman in my own way.' Sweet Will has hit him off to a hair!—

'The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword.'

Such a hand with a cue!—you should have seen him seek the 'bubble reputation at the *cannon's* mouth.' I may say," continued Mr Peacock, emphatically, "that he was a regular trump—trump!" he reiterated with a start, as if the word had stung him—"trump! he was a BRICK!"

Then fixing his eyes on me, dropping his arms, interlacing his fingers in the manner recorded of Talma in

the celebrated "Qu'en dis-tu!" he resumed in a hollow voice, slow and distinct——

"When—saw—you—him,—young m—m—a—n—nnn?"

Finding the tables thus turned on myself, and not willing to give Mr Peac— any clue to poor Vivian (who thus appeared, to my great satisfaction, to have finally dropped an acquaintance more versatile than reputable), I contrived, by a few evasive sentences, to keep Mr Peac—'s curiosity at a distance, till he was summoned in haste to change his attire for the domestic drama. And so we parted.

CHAPTER VI.

I HATE law details as cordially as my readers can, and therefore I shall content myself with stating that Mr Pike's management, at the end, not of three days, but of two weeks, was so admirable, that Uncle Jack was drawn out of prison, and my father extracted from all his liabilities, by a sum two-thirds less than was first startlingly submitted to our indignant horror—and that, too, in a manner that would have satisfied the conscience of the most punctilious formalist, whose contribution to the national fund, for an omitted payment to the Income Tax, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ever had the honour to acknowledge. Still, the sum was very large in proportion to my poor father's income: and what with Jack's debts, the claims of the Anti-Publisher Society's printer—including the very expensive plates that had been so lavishly bespoken, and in great part completed, for the *History of Human Error* — and, above all, the liabilities incurred on *The Capitalist;* what with the *plant*, as Mr Peck technically phrased a great upas-tree of a total, branching out into types, cases, printing-presses, engines, &c., all now to be resold at a third of their value; what with advertisements and bills,

that had covered all the dead-walls by which rubbish might be shot, throughout the three kingdoms ; what with the dues of reporters, and salaries of writers, who had been engaged for a year at least to *The Capitalist*, and whose claims survived the wretch they had killed and buried; what, in short, with all that the combined ingenuity of Uncle Jack and Printer Peck could supply for the utter ruin of the Caxton family—even after all deductions, curtailments, and after all that one could extract in the way of just contribution from the least unsubstantial of those shadows called the shareholders —my father's fortune was reduced to a sum of between seven and eight thousand pounds, which being placed at mortgage at four per cent, yielded just £372, 10s. a-year—enough for my father to live upon, but not enough to afford also his son Pisistratus the advantages of education at Trinity College, Cambridge. The blow fell rather upon me than my father, and my young shoulders bore it without much wincing.

This settled to our universal satisfaction, I went to pay my farewell visit to Sir Sedley Beaudesert. He had made much of me, during my stay in London. I had breakfasted and dined with him pretty often ; I had presented Squills to him, who no sooner set eyes upon that splendid conformation, than he described his character with the nicest accuracy, as the necessary consequence of such a development for the rosy pleasures of life. We had never once retouched on the subject of Fanny's marriage, and both of us tacitly avoided even mentioning the Trevanions. But in this last

visit, though he maintained the same reserve as to Fanny, he referred without scruple to her father.

"Well, my young Athenian," said he, after congratulating me on the result of the negotiations, and endeavouring again in vain to bear at least some share in my father's losses—"well, I see I cannot press this farther; but at least I *can* press on you any little interest I may have, in obtaining some appointment for yourself, in one of the public offices. Trevanion could of course be more useful, but I can understand that he is not the kind of man you would like to apply to."

"Shall I own to you, my dear Sir Sedley, that I have no taste for official employment? I am too fond of my liberty. Since I have been at my uncle's old Tower, I account for half my character by the Borderer's blood that is in me. I doubt if I am meant for the life of cities; and I have old floating notions in my head, that will serve to amuse me when I get home, and may settle into schemes. And now to change the subject, may I ask what kind of person has succeeded me as Mr Trevanion's secretary?"

"Why, he has got a broad-shouldered, stooping fellow, in spectacles and cotton stockings, who has written upon 'Rent,' I believe—an imaginative treatise in his case, I fear, for rent is a thing he could never have received, and not often been trusted to pay. However, he is one of your political economists, and wants Trevanion to sell his pictures, as 'unproductive capital.' Less mild than Pope's Narcissa, to make a

wash,' he would certainly 'stew a child.' Besides this official secretary, Trevanion trusts, however, a good deal to a clever, good-looking young gentleman, who is a great favourite with him."

"What is his name?"

"His name?—oh, Gower; a natural son, I believe, of one of the Gower family."

Here two of Sir Sedley's fellow fine gentlemen lounged in, and my visit ended.

CHAPTER VII.

"I SWEAR," cried my uncle, "that it *shall* be so." And with a big frown, and a truculent air, he seized the fatal instrument.

"Indeed, brother, it must not," said my father, laying one pale, scholarlike hand mildly on Captain Roland's brown, bellicose, and bony fist; and with the other, outstretched, protecting the menaced, palpitating victim.

Not a word had my uncle heard of our losses, until they had been adjusted, and the sum paid; for we all knew that the old Tower would have been gone—sold to some neighbouring squire or jobbing attorney—at the first impetuous impulse of Uncle Roland's affectionate generosity. Austin endangered! Austin ruined!—he would never have rested till he came, cash in hand, to his deliverance. Therefore, I say, not till all was settled did I write to the Captain, and tell him gaily what had chanced. And, however light I made of our misfortunes, the letter brought the Captain to the red brick house the same evening on which I myself reached it, and about an hour later. My uncle had not sold the Tower, but he came prepared to carry us

off to it *vi et armis*. We must live with him, and on him—let or sell the brick house, and put out the remnant of my father's income to nurse and accumulate. And it was on finding my father's resistance stubborn, and that hitherto he had made no way, that my uncle, stepping back into the hall, in which he had left his carpet bag, &c., returned with an old oak case, and, touching a spring roller, out flew the Caxton pedigree.

Out it flew—covering all the table, and undulating, Nile-like, till it had spread over books, papers, my mother's work-box, and the tea-service (for the table was large and compendious, emblematic of its owner's mind) and then, flowing on the carpet, dragged its slow length along till it was stopped by the fender.

"Now," said my uncle solemnly, "there never have been but two causes of difference between you and me, Austin. One is over; why should the other last? Aha! I know why you hang back; you think that we may quarrel about it!"

"About what, Roland?"

"About it, I say—and I'll be d—d if we do!" cried my uncle, reddening. "And I have been thinking a great deal upon the matter, and I have no doubt you are right. So I brought the old parchment with me, and you shall see me fill up the blank, just as you would have it. Now, then, you will come and live with me, and we can never quarrel any more."

Thus saying, Uncle Roland looked round for pen and ink; and, having found them—not without difficulty, for they had been submerged under the overflow

of the pedigree—he was about to fill up the *lacuna*, or *hiatus*, which had given rise to such memorable controversy, with the name of "William Caxton, printer in the Sanctuary," when my father, slowly recovering his breath, and aware of his brother's purpose, intervened. It would have done your heart good to hear them—so completely, in the inconsistency of human nature, had they changed sides upon the question—my father now all for Sir William de Caxton, the hero of Bosworth; my uncle all for the immortal printer. And in this discussion they grew animated: their eyes sparkled, their voices rose—Roland's voice deep and thunderous, Austin's sharp and piercing. Mr Squills stopped his ears. Thus it arrived at that point, when my uncle doggedly came to the end of all argumentation—"I swear that it shall be so:" and my father, trying the last resource of pathos, looked pleadingly into Roland's eyes, and said, with a tone soft as mercy, "Indeed, brother, it must not." Meanwhile the dry parchment crisped, creaked, and trembled in every pore of its yellow skin.

"But," said I, coming in, opportunely, like the Horatian deity, "I don't see that either of you gentlemen has a right so to dispose of my ancestry. It is quite clear that a man has no possession in posterity. Posterity may possess him; but deuce a bit will he ever be the better for his great great-grandchildren!"

Squills.—"Hear, hear!"

Pisistratus (warming).—"But a man's ancestry is a positive property to him. How much, not only of

acres, but of his constitution, his temper, his conduct, character, and nature, he may inherit from some progenitor ten times removed? Nay, without that progenitor, would he ever have been born—would a Squills ever have introduced him into the world, or a nurse ever have carried him *upo kolpo?*"

SQUILLS.—"Hear, hear!"

PISISTRATUS (with dignified emotion).—"No man, therefore, has a right to rob another of a forefather, with a stroke of his pen, from any motives, howsoever amiable. In the present instance, you will say, perhaps, that the ancestor in question is apocryphal—it may be the printer, it may be the knight. Granted; but here, where history is in fault, shall a mere sentiment decide? While both are doubtful, my imagination appropriates both. At one time I can reverence industry and learning in the printer; at another, valour and devotion in the knight. This kindly doubt gives me two great forefathers; and, through them, two trains of idea that influence my conduct under different circumstances. I will not permit you, Captain Roland, to rob me of either forefather—either train of idea. Leave, then, this sacred void unfilled, unprofaned; and accept this compromise of chivalrous courtesy—while my father lives with the Captain, we will believe in the printer; when away from the Captain, we will stand firm to the knight."

"Good!" cried Uncle Roland, as I paused, a little out of breath.

"And," said my mother softly, "I do think, Austin,

there is a way of settling the matter which will please all parties. It is quite sad to think that poor Roland, and dear little Blanche, should be all alone in the Tower ; and I am sure that we should be much happier all together."

"There," cried Roland triumphantly. "If you are not the most obstinate, hard-hearted, unfeeling brute in the world—which I don't take you to be—brother Austin, after that really beautiful speech of your wife's, there is not a word to be said further."

"But we have not yet heard Kitty to the end, Roland."

"I beg your pardon a thousand times, ma'am—sister," said the Captain, bowing.

"Well, I was going to add," said my mother, "that we will go and live with you, Roland, and club our little fortunes together. Blanche and I will take care of the house, and we shall be just twice as rich together as we are separately."

"Pretty sort of hospitality that ! " grunted the Captain. "I did not expect you to throw me over in that way. No, no ; you must lay by for the boy there—what's to become of him ? "

"But we shall *all* lay by for him," said my mother, simply ; "you as well as Austin. We shall have more to save, if we have more to spend."

"Ah, save !—that is easily said : there would be a pleasure in saving, then," said the Captain mournfully.

"And what's to become of me ? " cried Squills, very petulantly. "Am I to be left here in my old age—not

a rational soul to speak to, and no other place in the village where there's a drop of decent punch to be had! 'A plague on both your houses!' as the chap said at the theatre the other night."

"There's room for a doctor in our neighbourhood, Mr Squills," said the Captain. "The gentleman in your profession who *does for us*, wants, I know, to sell the business."

"Humph," said Squills—"a horribly healthy neighbourhood, I suspect!"

"Why, it has that misfortune, Mr Squills; but with your help," said my uncle, slyly, "a great alteration for the better may be effected in that respect."

Mr Squills was about to reply, when—ring—a-ting—ring—ting! there came such a brisk, impatient, make-one's-self-at-home kind of tintinabular alarum at the great gate, that we all started up and looked at each other in surprise. Who could it possibly be? We were not kept long in suspense; for in another moment, Uncle Jack's voice, which was always very clear and distinct, pealed through the hall; and we were still staring at each other when Mr Tibbets, with a bran-new muffler round his neck, and a peculiarly comfortable greatcoat—best double Saxony, equally new—dashed into the room, bringing with him a very considerable quantity of cold air, which he hastened to thaw, first in my father's arms, next in my mother's. He then made a rush at the Captain, who ensconced himself behind the dumb waiter with a "Hem! Mr —sir—Jack—sir—hem, hem!" Failing there, Mr

Tibbets rubbed off the remaining frost upon his double Saxony against your humble servant; patted Squills affectionately on the back, and then proceeded to occupy his favourite position before the fire.

"Took you by surprise, eh?" said Uncle Jack, unpeeling himself by the hearth-rug. "But no—not by surprise; you must have known Jack's heart: you at least, Austin Caxton, who know everything—you must have seen that it overflowed with the tenderest and most brotherly emotions; that once delivered from that cursed Fleet (you have no idea what a place it is, sir), I could not rest, night or day, till I had flown here—here, to the dear family nest—poor wounded dove that I am!" added Uncle Jack pathetically, and taking out his pocket-handkerchief from the double Saxony, which he had now flung over my father's arm-chair.

Not a word replied to this eloquent address, with its touching peroration. My mother hung down her pretty head, and looked ashamed. My uncle retreated quite into the corner, and drew the dumb waiter after him, so as to establish a complete fortification. Mr Squills seized the pen that Roland had thrown down, and began mending it furiously—that is, cutting it into slivers—thereby denoting, symbolically, how he would like to do with Uncle Jack, could he once get him safe and snug under his manipular operations. I bent over the pedigree, and my father rubbed his spectacles.

The silence would have been appalling to another man: nothing appalled Uncle Jack.

Uncle Jack turned to the fire, and warmed first one

foot, then the other. This comfortable ceremony performed, he again faced the company—and resumed, musingly, and as if answering some imaginary observations—

"Yes, yes—you are right there—and a deuced unlucky speculation it proved too. But I was overruled by that fellow Peck. Says I to him—says I—'*Capitalist!* pshaw—no popular interest there—it don't address the great public! Very confined class the capitalists; better throw ourselves boldly on the people! Yes,' said I, 'call it the *Anti*-Capitalist.' By Jove! sir, we should have carried all before us! but I was overruled. The *Anti-Capitalist!*—what an idea! Address the whole reading world, there, sir: everybody hates the capitalist—everybody would have his neighbour's money. The *Anti-Capitalist!*—sir, we should have gone off, in the manufacturing towns, like wildfire. But what could I do?——"

"John Tibbets," said my father, solemnly, "Capitalist or Anti-Capitalist, thou hadst a right to follow thine own bent in either—but always provided it had been with thine own money. Thou seest not the thing, John Tibbets, in the right point of view; and a little repentance in the face of those thou hast wronged, would not have misbecome thy father's son, and thy sister's brother!"

Never had so severe a rebuke issued from the mild lips of Austin Caxton; and I raised my eyes with a compassionate thrill, expecting to see John Tibbets gradually sink and disappear through the carpet.

"Repentance!" cried Uncle Jack, bounding up, as if he had been shot. "And do you think I have a heart of stone, of pummystone!—do you think I don't repent? I have done nothing but repent—I shall repent to my dying day."

"Then there is no more to be said, Jack," cried my father, softening, and holding out his hand.

"Yes!" cried Mr Tibbets, seizing the hand, and pressing it to the heart he had thus defended from the suspicion of being pummy—"yes,—that I should have trusted that dunder-headed, rascally, curmudgeon Peck: that I should have let him call it *The Capitalist*, despite all my convictions, when the *Anti*——"

"Pshaw!" interrupted my father, drawing away his hand.

"John," said my mother, gravely, and with tears in her voice, "you forget who delivered you from prison, —you forget whom you have nearly consigned to prison yourself—you forg——"

"Hush, hush!" said my father, "this will never do; and it is you who forget, my dear, the obligations I owe to Jack. He has reduced my fortune one-half, it is true; but I verily think he has made the three hearts, in which lie my real treasures, twice as large as they were before. Pisistratus, my boy, ring the bell."

"My dear Kitty," cried Jack, whimperingly, and stealing up to my mother, "don't be so hard on me; I thought to make all your fortunes—I did indeed."

Here the servant entered.

"See that Mr Tibbets' things are taken up to his room, and that there is a good fire," said my father.

"And," continued Jack, loftily, "I *will* make all your fortunes yet. I have it *here!*" and he struck his head.

"Stay a moment!" said my father to the servant, who had got back to the door. "Stay a moment," said my father, looking extremely frightened; "perhaps Mr Tibbets may prefer the inn!"

"Austin," said Uncle Jack, with emotion, "if I were a dog, with no home but a dog-kennel, and you came to me for shelter, I would turn out—to give you the best of the straw."

My father was thoroughly melted this time.

"Primmins will be sure to see everything is made comfortable for Mr Tibbets," said he, waving his hand to the servant. "Something nice for supper, Kitty, my dear—and the largest punch-bowl. You like punch, Jack?"

"Punch, Austin!" said Uncle Jack, putting his handkerchief to his eyes.

The Captain pushed aside the dumb waiter, strode across the room, and shook hands with Uncle Jack; my mother buried her face in her apron, and fairly ran off; and Squills said in my ear, "It all comes of the biliary secretions. Nobody could account for this, who did not know the peculiarly fine organisation of your father's—liver!"

PART TWELFTH.

CHAPTER I.

The Hegira is completed—we have all taken roost in the old tower. My father's books have arrived by the waggon, and have settled themselves quietly in their new abode—filling up the apartment dedicated to their owner, including the bed-chamber and two lobbies. The duck also has arrived, under wing of Mrs Primmins, and has reconciled herself to the old stewpond, by the side of which my father has found a walk that compensates for the peach-wall—especially as he has made acquaintance with sundry respectable carps, who permit him to feed them after he has fed the duck—a privilege of which (since, if any one else approaches, the carps are off in an instant) my father is naturally vain. All privileges are valuable in proportion to the exclusiveness of their enjoyment.

Now, from the moment the first carp had eaten the bread my father threw to it, Mr Caxton had mentally resolved that a race so confiding should never

be sacrificed to Ceres and Primmins. But all the fishes on my uncle's property were under the special care of that Proteus Bolt—and Bolt was not a man likely to suffer the carps to earn their bread without contributing their full share to the wants of the community. But, like master, like man! Bolt was an aristocrat fit to be hung *à la lanterne*. He out-Rolanded Roland in the respect he entertained for sounding names and old families; and by that bait my father caught him with such skill, that you might see that, if Austin Caxton had been an angler of fishes, he could have filled his basket full any day, shine or rain.

"You observe, Bolt," said my father, beginning artfully, "that those fishes, dull as you may think them, are creatures capable of a syllogism; and if they saw that, in proportion to their civility to me, they were depopulated by you, they would put two and two together, and renounce my acquaintance."

"Is that what you call being silly Jems, sir?" said Bolt: "faith, there is many a good Christian not half so wise!"

"Man," answered my father, thoughtfully, "is an animal less syllogistical, or more silly-Jemical, than many creatures popularly esteemed his inferiors. Yes, let but one of those Cyprinidæ, with his fine sense of logic, see that, if his fellow-fishes eat bread, they are suddenly jerked out of their element, and vanish for ever; and though you broke a quartern loaf into crumbs, he would snap his tail at you with enlightened contempt. If," said my father, soliloquising, "I had

been as syllogistic as those scaly logicians, I should never have swallowed that hook, which—hum! there—least said soonest mended. But, Mr Bolt, to return to the Cyprinidæ."

"What's the hard name you call them 'ere carp, your honour?" asked Bolt.

"Cyprinidæ, a family of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales," replied Mr Caxton; "their teeth are generally confined to the Pharyngeans, and their branchiostegous rays are but few—marks of distinction from fishes vulgar and voracious."

"Sir," said Bolt, glancing to the stewpond, "if I had known they had been a family of such importance, I am sure I should have treated them with more respect."

"They are a very old family, Bolt, and have been settled in England since the fourteenth century. A younger branch of the family has established itself in a pond in the gardens of Peterhoff (the celebrated palace of Peter the Great, Bolt—an emperor highly respected by my brother, for he killed a great many people very gloriously in battle, besides those whom he sabred for his own private amusement). And there is an officer or servant of the Imperial household, whose task it is to summon those Russian Cyprinidæ to dinner, by ringing a bell, shortly after which you may see the emperor and empress, with all their waiting ladies and gentlemen, coming down in their carriages to see the Cyprinidæ eat in state. So you perceive, Bolt, that it would be a republican, Jacobinical proceeding to stew members of a family so intimately associated with royalty."

"Dear me, sir," said Bolt, "I am very glad you told me. I ought to have known they were genteel fish, they are so mighty shy—as all your real quality are."

My father smiled, and rubbed his hands gently; he had carried his point, and henceforth the Cyprinidæ of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales were as sacred in Bolt's eyes as cats and ichneumons were in those of a priest in Thebes.

My poor father! with what true and unostentatious philosophy thou didst accommodate thyself to the greatest change thy quiet, harmless life had known, since it had passed out of the brief burning cycle of the passions. Lost was the home endeared to thee by so many noiseless victories of the mind—so many mute histories of the heart—for only the scholar knoweth how deep a charm lies in monotony, in the old associations, the old ways, and habitual clockwork of peaceful time. Yet, the home may be replaced—thy heart built its home round itself everywhere—and the old Tower might supply the loss of the brick house, and the walk by the stewpond become as dear as the haunts by the sunny peach-wall. But what shall replace to thee the bright dream of thine innocent ambition,—that angel-wing which had glittered across thy manhood, in the hour between its noon and its setting? What replace to thee the Magnum Opus—the Great Book!—fair and broad-spreading tree—lone amidst the sameness of the landscape—now plucked up by the roots. The oxygen was subtracted from the air of thy life. For be it

known to you, O my compassionate readers, that with the death of the Anti-Publisher Society the blood-streams of the Great Book stood still—its pulse was arrested—its full heart beat no more. Three thousand copies of the first seven sheets in quarto, with sundry unfinished plates, anatomical, architectural, and graphic, depicting various developments of the human skull (that temple of Human Error), from the Hottentot to the Greek; sketches of ancient buildings, Cyclopean and Pelasgic; Pyramids, and Pur-tors, all signs of races whose handwriting was on their walls; landscapes to display the influence of Nature upon the customs, creeds, and philosophy of men—here showing how the broad Chaldean wastes led to the contemplation of the stars; and illustrations of the Zodiac, in elucidation of the mysteries of symbol-worship; fantastic vagaries of earth fresh from the Deluge, tending to impress on early superstition the awful sense of the rude powers of Nature; views of the rocky defiles of Laconia; Sparta, neighboured by the "silent Amyclæ," explaining, as it were geographically, the iron customs of the warrior colony (arch Tories, amidst the shift and roar of Hellenic democracies), contrasted by the seas, and coasts, and creeks of Athens and Ionia, tempting to adventure, commerce, and change. Yea, my father, in his suggestions to the artist of those few imperfect plates, had thrown as much light on the infancy of earth and its tribes as by the "shining words" that flowed from his calm, starry knowledge! Plates and copies, all rested now in peace and dust—"housed with

darkness and with death," on the sepulchral shelves of the lobby to which they were consigned—rays intercepted—worlds incompleted. The Prometheus was bound, and the fire he had stolen from heaven lay imbedded in the flints of his rock. For so costly was the mould in which Uncle Jack and the Anti-Publisher Society had contrived to cast this Exposition of Human Error, that every bookseller shyed at its very sight, as an owl blinks at daylight, or human error at truth. In vain Squills and I, before we left London, had carried a gigantic specimen of the Magnum Opus into the back-parlours of firms the most opulent and adventurous. Publisher after publisher started, as if we had held a blunderbuss to his ear. All Paternoster Row uttered a "Lord deliver us!" Human Error found no man so egregiously its victim as to complete those two quartos, with the prospect of two others, at his own expense. Now, I had earnestly hoped that my father, for the sake of mankind, would be persuaded to risk some portion—and that, I own, not a small one—of his remaining capital on the conclusion of an undertaking so elaborately begun. But there my father was obdurate. No big words about mankind, and the advantage to unborn generations, could stir him an inch. Stuff!" said Mr Caxton, peevishly. "A man's duties to mankind and posterity begin with his own son; and having wasted half your patrimony, I will not take another huge slice out of the poor remainder to gratify my vanity, for that is the plain truth of it. Man must atone for sin by expiation.

By the book I have sinned, and the book must expiate it. Pile the sheets up in the lobby, so that at least one man may be wiser and humbler by the sight of Human Error, every time he walks by so stupendous a monument of it."

Verily, I know not how my father could bear to look at those dumb fragments of himself—strata of the Caxtonian conformation lying layer upon layer, as if packed up and disposed for the inquisitive genius of some moral Murchison or Mantell. But for my part, I never glanced at their repose in the dark lobby, without thinking, "Courage, Pisistratus! courage! there's something worth living for; work hard, grow rich, and the Great Book shall come out at last."

Meanwhile, I wandered over the country, and made acquaintance with the farmers, and with Trevanion's steward—an able man, and a great agriculturist—and I learned from them a better notion of the nature of my uncle's domains. Those domains covered an immense acreage, which, save a small farm, was of no value at present. But land of the same sort had been lately redeemed by a simple kind of draining, now well known in Cumberland; and, with capital, Roland's barren moors might become a noble property. But capital, where was that to come from? Nature gives us all except the means to turn her into marketable account. As old Plautus saith so wittily, "Day, night, water, sun, and moon, are to be had gratis; for everything else—down with your dust!"

CHAPTER II.

Nothing has been heard of Uncle Jack. Before we left the brick house, the Captain gave him an invitation to the Tower—more, I suspect, out of compliment to my mother, than from the unbidden impulse of his own inclinations. But Mr Tibbets politely declined it. During his stay at the brick house, he had received and written a vast number of letters—some of those he received, indeed, were left at the village post-office, under the alphabetical addresses of A B or X Y; for no misfortune ever paralysed the energies of Uncle Jack. In the winter of adversity he vanished, it is true; but even in vanishing, he vegetated still. He resembled those *algæ*, termed the *Prolococcus nivales*, which give a rose-colour to the Polar snows that conceal them, and flourish unsuspected amidst the general dissolution of Nature. Uncle Jack, then, was as lively and sanguine as ever—though he began to let fall vague hints of intentions to abandon the general cause of his fellow-creatures, and to set up business henceforth purely on his own account; wherewith my father —to the great shock of my belief in his philanthropy —expressed himself much pleased. And I strongly

suspect that, when Uncle Jack wrapped himself up in his new double Saxony, and went off at last, he carried with him something more than my father's good wishes in aid of his conversion to egotistical philosophy.

"That man will do yet," said my father, as the last glimpse was caught of Uncle Jack standing up on the stage-coach box, beside the driver, partly to wave his hand to us as we stood at the gate, and partly to array himself more commodiously in a box-coat with six capes, which the coachman had lent him.

"Do you think so, sir?" said I, doubtfully. "May I ask why?"

Mr Caxton.—"On the cat principle—that he tumbles so lightly. You may throw him down from St Paul's, and the next time you see him he will be scrambling a-top of the Monument."

Pisistratus.—"But a cat the most viparious is limited to nine lives; and Uncle Jack must be now far gone in his eighth."

Mr Caxton (not heeding that answer, for he has got his hand in his waistcoat).—"The earth, according to Apuleius, in his *Treatise on the Philosophy of Plato*, was produced from right-angled triangles; but fire and air from the scalene triangle—the angles of which, I need not say, are very different from those of a right-angled triangle. Now I think there are people in the world of whom one can only judge rightly according to those mathematical principles applied to their original construction: for if air or fire predominates in our natures, we are scalene triangles;—if earth, right-

angled. Now, as air is so notably manifested in Jack's conformation, he is, *nolens volens*, produced in conformity with his preponderating element. He is a scalene triangle, and must be judged, accordingly, upon irregular, lop-sided principles ; whereas you and I, commonplace mortals, are produced, like the earth, which is our preponderating element, with our triangles all right-angled, comfortable and complete ; for which blessing let us thank Providence, and be charitable to those who are necessarily windy and gaseous, from that unlucky scalene triangle upon which they have had the misfortune to be constructed, and which, you perceive, is quite at variance with the mathematical constitution of the earth !"

Pisistratus.—"Sir, I am very happy to hear so simple, easy, and intelligible an explanation of Uncle Jack's peculiarities ; and I only hope that, for the future, the sides of his scalene triangle may never be produced to our rectangular conformations."

Mr Caxton (descending from his stilts with an air as mildly reproachful as if I had been cavilling at the virtues of Socrates).—"You don't do your uncle justice, Pisistratus ; he is a very clever man ; and I am sure that, in spite of his scalene misfortune, he would be an honest one—that is (added Mr Caxton, correcting himself), not romantically or heroically honest, but honest as men go—if he could but keep his head long enough above water ; but, you see, when the best man in the world is engaged in the process of sinking, he catches

hold of whatever comes in his way, and drowns the very friend who is swimming to save him."

PISISTRATUS.—"Perfectly true, sir; but Uncle Jack makes it his business to be always sinking!"

MR CAXTON (with *naïveté*).—"And how could it be otherwise, when he has been carrying all his fellow-creatures in his breeches pockets! Now he has got rid of that dead weight, I should not be surprised if he swam like a cork."

PISISTRATUS (who, since the *Capitalist*, has become a strong Anti-Jackian).—"But if, sir, you really think Uncle Jack's love for his fellow-creatures is genuine, that is surely not the worst part of him."

MR CAXTON.—"O literal ratiocinator, and dull to the true logic of Attic irony! can't you comprehend that an affection may be genuine as felt by the man; yet its nature be spurious in relation to others? A man may genuinely believe he loves his fellow-creatures, when he roasts them like Torquemada, or guillotines them like St Just! Happily Jack's scalene triangle, being more produced from air than from fire, does not give to his philanthropy the inflammatory character which distinguishes the benevolence of inquisitors and revolutionists. The philanthropy, therefore, takes a more flatulent and innocent form, and expends its strength in mounting paper balloons, out of which Jack pitches himself, with all the fellow-creatures he can coax into sailing with him. No doubt Uncle Jack's philanthropy is sincere, when he cuts the string and soars up out of

sight; but the sincerity will not much mend their bruises when himself and fellow-creatures come tumbling down neck and heels. It must be a very wide heart that can take in all mankind—and of a very strong fibre to bear so much stretching. Such hearts there are, Heaven be thanked!—and all praise to them! Jack's is not of that quality. He is a scalene triangle. He is not a circle! And yet, if he would but let it rest, it is a good heart—a very good heart (continued my father, warming into a tenderness quite infantine, all things considered). Poor Jack! that was prettily said of him—'That if he were a dog, and he had no home but a dog-kennel, he would turn out to give me the best of the straw!' Poor brother Jack!"

So the discussion was dropped; and, in the meanwhile, Uncle Jack, like the short-faced gentleman in the SPECTATOR, "distinguished himself by a profound silence."

CHAPTER III.

Blanche has contrived to associate herself, if not with my more active diversions—in running over the country, and making friends with the farmers—still in all my more leisurely and domestic pursuits. There is about her a silent charm that it is very hard to define, but it seems to arise from a kind of innate sympathy with the moods and humours of those she loves. If one is gay, there is a cheerful ring in her silver laugh that seems gladness itself; if one is sad, and creeps away into a corner to bury one's head in one's hand, and muse—by-and-by, and just at the right moment, when one has mused one's fill, and the heart wants something to refresh and restore it, one feels two innocent arms round one's neck—looks up—and lo! Blanche's soft eyes, full of wistful compassionate kindness; though she has the tact not to question—it is enough for her to sorrow with your sorrow—she cares not to know more. A strange child!—fearless, and yet seemingly fond of things that inspire children with fear; fond of tales of fay, sprite, and ghost, which Mrs Primmins draws fresh and new from her memory, as a conjurer draws pancakes hot and hot from a hat.

And yet so sure is Blanche of her own innocence, that they never trouble her dreams in her lone little room, full of caliginous corners and nooks, with the winds moaning round the desolate ruins, and the casements rattling hoarse in the dungeon-like wall. She would have no dread to walk through the ghostly keep in the dark, or cross the churchyard, what time,

"By the moon's doubtful and malignant light,"

the grave-stones look so spectral, and the shade from the yew-trees lies so still on the sward. When the brows of Roland are gloomiest, and the compression of his lips makes sorrow look sternest, be sure that Blanche is couched at his feet, waiting the moment when, with some heavy sigh, the muscles relax, and she is sure of the smile if she climbs to his knee. It is pretty to chance on her gliding up broken turret-stairs, or standing hushed in the recess of shattered casements, and you wonder what thoughts of vague awe and solemn pleasure can be at work under that still little brow.

She has a quick comprehension of all that is taught to her; she already tasks to the full my mother's educational arts. My father has had to rummage his library for books, to feed (or extinguish) her desire for "farther information;" and has promised lessons in French and Italian—at some golden time in the shadowy "By-and-by"—which are received so gratefully that one might think Blanche mistook *Télémaque* and *Novelle Morali* for baby-houses and dolls. Heaven send her

through French and Italian with better success than attended Mr Caxton's lessons in Greek to Pisistratus! She has an ear for music, which my mother, who is no bad judge, declares to be exquisite. Luckily there is an old Italian settled in a town ten miles off, who is said to be an excellent music-master, and who comes the round of the neighbouring squirearchy twice a-week. I have taught her to draw—an accomplishment in which I am not without skill—and she has already taken a sketch from nature, which, barring the perspective, is not so amiss; indeed, she has caught the notion of "idealising" (which promises future originality) from her own natural instincts, and given to the old witch-elm that hangs over the stream, just the bow that it wanted to dip into the water, and soften off the hard lines. My only fear is, that Blanche should become too dreamy and thoughtful. Poor child, she has no one to play with! So I look out, and get her a dog—frisky and young, who abhors sedentary occupations—a spaniel, small and coal-black, with ears sweeping the ground. I baptise him "Juba," in honour of Addison's Cato, and in consideration of his sable curls and Mauritanian complexion. Blanche does not seem so eerie and elf-like while gliding through the ruins, when Juba barks by her side, and scares the birds from the ivy.

One day I had been pacing to and fro the hall, which was deserted; and the sight of the armour and portraits —dumb evidences of the active and adventurous lives of the old inhabitants, which seemed to reprove my own

inactive obscurity—had set me off on one of those Pegaséan hobbies on which youth mounts to the skies—delivering maidens on rocks, and killing Gorgons and monsters—when Juba bounded in, and Blanche came after him, her straw-hat in her hand.

BLANCHE.—"I thought you were here, Sisty; may I stay?"

PISISTRATUS.—"Why, my dear child, the day is so fine, that instead of losing it in-doors, you ought to be running in the fields with Juba."

JUBA.—"Bow-wow."

BLANCHE.—"Will you come too? If Sisty stays in, Blanche does not care for the butterflies!"

Pisistratus, seeing that the thread of his day-dreams is broken, consents with an air of resignation. Just as they gain the door, Blanche pauses, and looks as if there were something on her mind.

PISISTRATUS.—"What now, Blanche? Why are you making knots in that ribbon, and writing invisible characters on the floor with the point of that busy little foot?"

BLANCHE (mysteriously).—"I have found a new room, Sisty. Do you think we may look into it?"

PISISTRATUS.—"Certainly; unless any Bluebeard of your acquaintance told you not. Where is it?"

BLANCHE.—"Up-stairs—to the left."

PISISTRATUS.—"That little old door, going down two stone steps, which is always kept locked?"

BLANCHE.—"Yes! it is not locked to-day. The door was ajar, and I peeped in; but I would not do more

till I came and asked you if you thought it would not be wrong."

PISISTRATUS.—"Very good in you, my discreet little cousin. I have no doubt it is a ghost-trap; however, with Juba's protection, I think we might venture together."

Pisistratus, Blanche, and Juba, ascend the stairs, and turn off down a dark passage to the left, away from the rooms in use. We reached the arch-pointed door of oak planks nailed roughly together—we push it open, and perceive that a small stair winds down from the room: it is just over Roland's chamber.

The room has a damp smell, and has probably been left open to be aired, for the wind comes through the unbarred casement, and a billet burns on the hearth. The place has that attractive, fascinating air which belongs to a lumber-room, than which I know nothing that so captivates the interest and fancy of young people. What treasures, to them, often lie hid in those quaint odds and ends which the elder generations have discarded as rubbish! All children are by nature antiquarians and relic-hunters. Still there is an order and precision with which the articles in that room are stowed away that belies the true notion of lumber—none of the mildew and dust which give such mournful interest to things abandoned to decay.

In one corner are piled up cases, and military-looking trunks of outlandish aspect, with R. D. C. in brass nails on their sides. From these we turn with involuntary respect, and call off Juba, who has wedged

himself behind in pursuit of some imaginary mouse. But in the other corner is what seems to me a child's cradle—not an English one evidently: it is of wood, seemingly Spanish rosewood, with a railwork at the back, of twisted columns; and I should scarcely have known it to be a cradle but for the fairy-like quilt and the tiny pillows which proclaimed its uses.

On the wall above the cradle were arranged sundry little articles, that had, perhaps, once made the joy of a child's heart—broken toys with the paint rubbed off, a tin sword and trumpet, and a few tattered books, mostly in Spanish—by their shape and look, doubtless, children's books. Near these stood, on the floor, a picture with its face to the wall. Juba had chased the mouse that his fancy still insisted on creating, behind this picture, and, as he abruptly drew back, the picture fell into the hands I stretched forth to receive it. I turned the face to the light, and was surprised to see merely an old family portrait; it was that of a gentleman in the flowered vest and stiff ruff which referred the date of his existence to the reign of Elizabeth—a man with a bold and noble countenance. On the corner was placed a faded coat of arms, beneath which was inscribed, "HERBERT DE CAXTON, EQ: AUR: ÆTAT: 35."

On the back of the canvass I observed, as I now replaced the picture against the wall, a label in Roland's handwriting, though in a younger and more running hand than he now wrote. The words were these:—"The best and bravest of our line. He charged by

Sydney's side on the field of Zutphen; he fought in Drake's ship against the armament of Spain. If ever I have a——" The rest of the label seemed to have been torn off.

I turned away, and felt a remorseful shame that I had so far gratified my curiosity,—if by so harsh a name the powerful interest that had absorbed me must be called. I looked round for Blanche; she had retreated from my side to the door, and, with her hands before her eyes, was weeping. As I stole towards her, my glance fell on a book that lay on a chair near the casement, and beside those relics of an infancy once pure and serene. By the old-fashioned silver clasps, I recognised Roland's Bible. I felt as if I had been almost guilty of profanation in my thoughtless intrusion. I drew away Blanche, and we descended the stairs noiselessly; and not till we were on our favourite spot, amidst a heap of ruins on the feudal justice-hill, did I seek to kiss away her tears and ask the cause.

"My poor brother!" sobbed Blanche, "they must have been his—and we shall never, never see him again!—and poor papa's Bible, which he reads when he is very, very sad! I did not weep enough when my brother died. I know better what death is now! Poor papa! poor papa! Don't die, too, Sisty!"

There was no running after butterflies that morning; and it was long before I could soothe Blanche. Indeed she bore the traces of dejection in her soft looks for many, many days; and she often asked me, sighingly, "Don't you think it was very wrong in me to take you

there?" Poor little Blanche, true daughter of Eve, she would not let me bear my due share of the blame; she would have it all in Adam's primitive way of justice—"The woman tempted me, and I did eat." And since then Blanche has seemed more fond than ever of Roland, and comparatively deserts me to nestle close to him, and closer, till he looks up and says, "My child, you are pale: go and run after the butterflies;" and she says now to him, not to me, "Come too!" drawing him out into the sunshine with a hand that will not loose its hold.

Of all Roland's line, this Herbert de Caxton was "the best and bravest!" yet he had never named that ancestor to me—never put any forefather in comparison with the dubious and mythical Sir William. I now remembered once, that, in going over the pedigree, I had been struck by the name of Herbert—the only Herbert in the scroll—and had asked, "What of him, uncle?" and Roland had muttered something inaudible, and turned away. And I remembered, also, that in Roland's room there was the mark in the wall where a picture of that size had once hung. The picture had been removed thence before we first came, but must have hung there for years to have left that mark on the wall;—perhaps suspended by Bolt, during Roland's long Continental absence. "If ever I have a" ——What were the missing words? Alas! did they not relate to the son—missed for ever, evidently not forgotten still?

CHAPTER IV.

My uncle sat on one side the fireplace, my mother on the other; and I, at a small table between them, prepared to note down the results of their conference; for they had met in high council, to assess their joint fortunes — determine what should be brought into the common stock, and set apart for the Civil List, and what should be laid aside as a Sinking Fund. Now my mother, true woman as she was, had a womanly love of show in her own quiet way—of making "a genteel figure" in the eyes of the neighbourhood—of seeing that sixpence not only went as far as sixpence ought to go, but that, in the going, it should emit a mild but imposing splendour,—not, indeed, a gaudy flash—a startling Borealian coruscation, which is scarcely within the modest and placid idiosyncrasies of sixpence —but a gleam of gentle and benign light, just to show where a sixpence had been, and allow you time to say "Behold!" before

"The jaws of darkness did devour it up."

Thus, as I once before took occasion to apprise the reader, we had always held a very respectable position

in the neighbourhood round our square brick house ; been as sociable as my father's habits would permit ; given our little tea-parties, and our occasional dinners, and, without attempting to vie with our richer associates, there had always been so exquisite a neatness, so notable a housekeeping, so thoughtful a disposition—in short, of all the properties indigenous to a well-spent sixpence, in my mother's management, that there was not an old maid within seven miles of us who did not pronounce our tea-parties to be perfect ; and the great Mrs Rollick, who gave forty guineas a-year to a professed cook and housekeeper, used regularly, whenever we dined at Rollick Hall, to call across the table to my mother (who therewith blushed up to her ears), to apologise for the strawberry jelly. It is true, that when, on returning home, my mother adverted to that flattering and delicate compliment, in a tone that revealed the self-conceit of the human heart, my father—whether to sober his Kitty's vanity into a proper and Christian mortification of spirit, or from that strange shrewdness which belonged to him—would remark that Mrs Rollick was of a querulous nature ; that the compliment was meant not to please my mother, but to spite the professed cook and housekeeper, to whom the butler would be sure to repeat the invidious apology.

In settling at the Tower, and assuming the head of its establishment, my mother was naturally anxious that, poor battered invalid though the Tower was, it should still put its best leg foremost. Sundry cards, despite the thinness of the neighbourhood, had been

left at the door; various invitations, which my uncle had hitherto declined, had greeted his occupation of the ancestral ruin, and had become more numerous since the news of our arrival had gone abroad; so that my mother saw before her a very suitable field for her hospitable accomplishments—a reasonable ground for her ambition that the Tower should hold up its head, as became a Tower that held the head of the family.

But not to wrong thee, O dear mother! as thou sittest there, opposite the grim Captain, so fair and so neat,—with thine apron as white, and thy hair as trim and as sheen, and thy morning cap, with its ribbons of blue, as coquettishly arranged as if thou hadst a fear that the least negligence on thy part might lose thee the heart of thine Austin—not to wrong thee by setting down to frivolous motives alone thy feminine visions of the social amenities of life, I know that thine heart, in its provident tenderness, was quite as much interested as ever thy vanities could be, in the hospitable thoughts on which thou wert intent. For, first and foremost, it was the wish of thy soul that thine Austin might, as little as possible, be reminded of the change in his fortunes,—might miss as little as possible those interruptions to his abstracted scholarly moods, at which, it is true, he used to fret and to pshaw and to cry Papæ! but which nevertheless always did him good, and freshened up the stream of his thoughts. And, next, it was the conviction of thine understanding that a little society, and boon companionship, and the proud pleasure of showing his ruins, and presiding

at the hall of his forefathers, would take Roland out of those gloomy reveries into which he still fell at times. And, thirdly, for us young people ought not Blanche to find companions in children of her own sex and age? Already in those large black eyes there was something melancholy and brooding, as there is in the eyes of all children who live only with their elders; and for Pisistratus, with his altered prospects, and the one great gnawing memory at his heart—which he tried to conceal from himself, but which a mother (and a mother who had loved) saw at a glance—what could be better than such union and interchange with the world around us, small though that world might be, as woman, sweet binder and blender of all social links, might artfully effect? — So that thou didst not go, like the awful Florentine,

"Sopra lor vanità che par persona,"

"over thin shadows that mocked the substance of real forms," but rather it was the real forms that appeared as shadows or *vanità*.

What a digression!—can I never tell my story in a plain straightforward way? Certainly I was born under Cancer, and all my movements are circumlocutory, sideways, and crab-like.

CHAPTER V.

"I THINK, Roland," said my mother, "that the establishment is settled. Bolt, who is equal to three men at least; Primmins, cook and housekeeper; Molly, a good stirring girl—and willing (though I've had some difficulty in persuading her to submit not to be called Anna Maria). Their wages are but a small item, my dear Roland."

"Hem!" said Roland, "since we can't do with fewer servants at less wages, I suppose we must call it small."

"It is so," said my mother, with mild positiveness. "And, indeed, what with the game and fish, and the garden and poultry-yard, and your own mutton, our housekeeping will be next to nothing."

"Hem!" again said the thrifty Roland, with a slight inflection of the beetle brows. "It may be next to nothing, ma'am—sister—just as a butcher's shop may be next to Northumberland House; but there is a vast deal between nothing and that next neighbour you have given it."

This speech was so like one of my father's—so *naïve* an imitation of that subtle reasoner's use of the rheto-

rical figure called ANTANACLASIS (or repetition of the same words in a different sense), that I laughed and my mother smiled. But she smiled reverently, not thinking of the ANTANACLASIS, as, laying her hand on Roland's arm, she replied in the yet more formidable figure of speech called EPIPHONEMA (or exclamation), "Yet, with all your economy, you would have had us——"

"Tut!" cried my uncle, parrying the EPIPHONEMA with a masterly APOSIOPESIS (or breaking off); "tut! if you had done what I wished, I should have had more pleasure for my money!"

My poor mother's rhetorical armoury supplied no weapon to meet that artful APOSIOPESIS; so she dropped the rhetoric altogether, and went on with that "unadorned eloquence" natural to her, as to other great financial reformers:—"Well, Roland, but I am a good housewife, I assure you, and—don't scold; but that you never do—I mean, don't look as if you would like to scold; the fact is, that, even after setting aside £100 a-year for our little parties—"

"Little parties!—a hundred a-year!" cried the Captain, aghast.

My mother pursued her way remorselessly—"Which we can well afford; and without counting your half-pay, which you must keep for pocket-money and your wardrobe and Blanche's, I calculate that we can allow Pisistratus £150 a-year, which, with the scholarship he is to get, will keep him at Cambridge" (at that, seeing the scholarship was as yet amidst the Pleasures of Hope, I shook my head doubtfully), "and," continued my

mother, not heeding that sign of dissent, "we shall still have something to lay by."

The Captain's face assumed a ludicrous expression of compassion and horror; he evidently thought my mother's misfortunes had turned her head.

His tormentor continued.

"For," said my mother, with a pretty calculating shake of her head, and a movement of the right forefinger towards the five fingers of the left hand, "£370—the interest of Austin's fortune—and £50, that we may reckon for the rent of our house, make £420 a-year. Add your £330 a-year from the farm, sheep-walk, and cottages that you let, and the total is £750. Now, with all we get for nothing for our housekeeping, as I said before, we can do very well with £500 a-year, and indeed make a handsome figure. So, after allowing Sisty £150, we still have £100 to lay by for Blanche."

"Stop, stop, stop!" cried the Captain in great agitation; "who told you that I had £330 a-year?"

"Why, Bolt—don't be angry with him."

"Bolt is a blockhead. From £330 a-year take £200, and the remainder is all my income, besides my half-pay."

My mother opened her eyes, and so did I.

"To that £130 add, if you please, £130 of your own. All that you have over, my dear sister, is yours or Austin's, or your boy's; but not a shilling can go to give luxuries to a miserly, battered old soldier. Do you understand me?"

"No, Roland," said my mother, "I don't understand

you at all. Does not your property bring in £330 a-year?"

"Yes, but it has a debt of £200 a-year on it," said the Captain gloomily and reluctantly.

"Oh, Roland!" cried my mother, tenderly, and approaching so near that, had my father been in the room, I am sure she would have been bold enough to kiss the stern Captain, though I never saw him look sterner, and less kissable—"Oh, Roland!" cried my mother, concluding that famous EPIPHONEMA which my uncle's APOSIOPESIS had before nipped in the bud, "and yet you would have made us, who are twice as rich, rob you of this little all!"

"Ah!" said Roland, trying to smile, "but I should have had my own way then, and starved you shockingly. No talk then of 'little parties,' and suchlike. But you must not now turn the tables against me, nor bring your £420 a-year as a set-off to my £130."

"Why," said my mother generously, "you forget the money's worth that you contribute—all that your grounds supply, and all that we save by it. I am sure that that's worth a yearly £300 at the least."

"Madam—sister," said the Captain, "I'm sure you don't want to hurt my feelings. All I have to say is, that, if you add to what I bring an equal sum—to keep up the poor old ruin—it is the utmost that I can allow, and the rest is not more than Pisistratus can spend."

So saying, the Captain rose, bowed, and, before either of us could stop him, hobbled out of the room.

"Dear me, Sisty!" said my mother, wringing her hands, "I have certainly displeased him. How could I guess he had so large a debt on the property?"

"Did not he pay his son's debts? Is not that the reason that——"

"Ah!" interrupted my mother, almost crying, "and it was that which ruffled him; and I not to guess it? What shall I do?"

"Set to work at a new calculation, dear mother, and let him have his own way."

"But then," said my mother, "your uncle will mope himself to death, and your father will have no relaxation, while you see that he has lost his former object in his books. And Blanche—and you too. If we were only to contribute what dear Roland does, I do not see how, with £260 a-year, we could ever bring our neighbours round us! I wonder what Austin would say! I have half a mind—no, I'll go and look over the week-books with Primmins."

My mother went her way sorrowfully, and I was left alone.

Then I looked on the stately old hall, grand in its forlorn decay. And the dreams I had begun to cherish at my heart swept over me, and hurried me along, far, far away into the golden land, whither Hope beckons youth. To restore my father's fortunes—re-weave the links of that broken ambition which had knit his genius with the world—rebuild those fallen walls—cultivate those barren moors—revive the ancient name—glad the

old soldier's age—and be to *both* the brothers what Roland had lost—a son! These were my dreams; and when I woke from them, lo! they had left behind an intense purpose, a resolute object. Dream, O youth! —dream manfully and nobly, and thy dreams shall be prophets!

CHAPTER VI.

LETTER FROM PISISTRATUS CAXTON TO ALBERT TREVANION, ESQ., M.P.

(The confession of a youth who in the Old World finds himself one too many.)

"My dear Mr Trevanion,—I thank you cordially, and so we do all, for your reply to my letter, informing you of the villanous traps through which we have passed—not indeed with whole skins, but still whole in life and limb—which, considering that the traps were three, and the teeth sharp, was more than we could reasonably expect. We have taken to the wastes, like wise foxes as we are, and I do not think a bait can be found that will again snare the fox paternal. As for the fox filial, it is different, and I am about to prove to you that he is burning to redeem the family disgrace. Ah! my dear Mr Trevanion, if you are busy with 'blue-books' when this letter reaches you, stop here, and put it aside for some rare moment of leisure. I am about to open my heart to you, and ask you, who know the world so well, to aid me in an escape from those *flammantia mœnia*,

wherewith I find that world begirt and enclosed. For look you, sir, you and my father were right when you both agreed that the mere book-life was not meant for me. And yet what is not book-life, to a young man who would make his way through the ordinary and conventional paths to fortune? All the professions are so book-lined, book-hemmed, book-choked, that wherever these strong hands of mine stretch towards action, they find themselves met by octavo ramparts, flanked with quarto crenellations. For first, this college life, opening to scholarships, and ending, perchance, as you political economists would desire, in Malthusian fellowships—premiums for celibacy—consider what manner of thing it is!

"Three years, book upon book,—a great Dead Sea before one, three years long, and all the apples that grow on the shore full of the ashes of pica and primer! Those three years ended, the fellowship, it may be, won,—still books—books—if the whole world does not close at the college gates. Do I, from scholar, effloresce into literary man, author by profession?—books—books! Do I go into the law?—books—books! *Ars longa, vita brevis,* which, paraphrased, means that it is slow work before one fags one's way to a brief! Do I turn doctor? Why, what but books can kill time, until, at the age of forty, a lucky chance may permit me to kill something else? The church (for which, indeed, I don't profess to be good enough),—that is book-life *par excellence,* whether, inglorious and poor, I wander through long lines of divines and fathers; or,

ambitious of bishoprics, I amend the corruptions, not of the human heart, but of a Greek text, and through defiles of scholiasts and commentators win my way to the See. In short, barring the noble profession of arms—which you know, after all, is not precisely the road to fortune—can you tell me any means by which one may escape these eternal books, this mental clockwork and corporeal lethargy? Where can this passion for life that runs riot through my veins find its vent? Where can these stalwart limbs and this broad chest grow of value and worth, in this hot-bed of cerebral inflammation and dyspeptic intellect? I know what is in me; I know I have the qualities that should go with stalwart limbs and broad chest. I have some plain common-sense, some promptitude and keenness, some pleasure in hardy danger, some fortitude in bearing pain—qualities for which I bless Heaven, for they are qualities good and useful in private life. But in the forum of men, in the market of fortune, are they not *flocci, nauci, nihili?*

"In a word, dear sir and friend, in this crowded Old World, there is not the same room that our bold forefathers found for men to walk about and jostle their neighbours. No; they must sit down like boys at their form, and work out their tasks, with rounded shoulders and aching fingers. There has been a pastoral age, and a hunting age, and a fighting age. Now we have arrived at the age sedentary. Men who sit longest carry all before them: puny delicate fellows, with hands just strong enough to wield a pen, eyes so

bleared by the midnight lamp that they see no joy in that buxom sun (which draws me forth into the fields, as life draws the living), and digestive organs worn and macerated by the relentless flaggellation of the brain. Certainly, if this is to be the Reign of Mind, it is idle to repine, and kick against the pricks; but is it true that all these qualities of action that are within me are to go for nothing? If I were rich and happy in mind and circumstances, well and good; I should shoot, hunt, farm, travel, enjoy life, and snap my fingers at ambition. If I were so poor and so humbly bred that I could turn gamekeeper or whipper-in, as pauper gentlemen virtually did of old, well and good too; I should exhaust this troublesome vitality of mine, by nightly battles with poachers, and leaps over double dykes and stone walls. If I were so depressed of spirit that I could live without remorse on my father's small means, and exclaim with Claudian, 'The earth gives me feasts that cost nothing,' well and good too; it were a life to suit a vegetable, or a very minor poet. But as it is!—here I open another leaf of my heart to you! To say that, being poor, I want to make a fortune, is to say that I am an Englishman. To attach ourselves to a thing positive, belongs to our practical race. Even in our dreams, if we build castles in the air, they are not *Castles of Indolence*,—indeed they have very little of the castle about them, and look much more like Hoare's Bank on the east side of Temple Bar! I desire, then, to make a fortune. But I differ from my countrymen, first, by desiring only what you rich men would call

but a *small* fortune ; secondly, in wishing that I may not spend my whole life in that fortune-making. Just see, now, how I am placed.

" Under ordinary circumstances, I must begin by taking from my father a large slice of an income that will ill spare paring. According to my calculation, my parents and my uncle want all they have got—and the subtraction of the yearly sum on which Pisistratus is to live, till he can live by his own labours, would be so much taken from the decent comforts of his kindred. If I return to Cambridge, with all economy, I must thus narrow still more the *res angusta domi*—and when Cambridge is over, and I am turned loose upon the world—failing, as is likely enough, of the support of a fellowship—how many years must I work, or rather, alas ! not work, at the bar (which, after all, seems my best calling), before I can in my turn provide for those who, till then, rob themselves for me?—till I have arrived at middle life, and they are old and worn out—till the chink of the golden bowl sounds but hollow at the ebbing well ! I would wish that, if I can make money, those I love best may enjoy it while enjoyment is yet left to them ; that my father shall see *The History of Human Error* complete, bound in russia on his shelves ; that my mother shall have the innocent pleasures that content her, before age steals the light from her happy smile ; that before Roland's hair is snow-white (alas ! the snows there thicken fast), he shall lean on my arm, while we settle together where the ruin shall be repaired or where left to the owls ; and where

the dreary bleak waste around shall laugh with the gleam of corn :—for you know the nature of this Cumberland soil—you, who possess much of it, and have won so many fair acres from the wild :—you know that my uncle's land, now (save a single farm) scarce worth a shilling an acre, needs but capital to become an estate more lucrative than ever his ancestors owned. You know that, for you have applied your capital to the same kind of land, and, in doing so, what blessings—which you scarcely think of in your London library—you have effected !—what mouths you feed, what hands you employ ! I have calculated that my uncle's moors, which now scarce maintain two or three shepherds, could, manured by money, maintain two hundred families by their labour. All this is worth trying for ! therefore Pisistratus wants to make money. Not so much ! he does not require millions—a few spare thousand pounds would go a long way ; and with a modest capital to begin with, Roland should become a true squire, a real landowner, not the mere lord of a desert. Now then, dear sir, advise me how I may, with such qualities as I possess, arrive at that capital—ay, and before it is too late—so that money-making may not last till my grave.

" Turning in despair from this civilised world of ours, I have cast my eyes to a world far older,—and yet more to a world in its giant childhood. India here,—Australia there !—what say you, sir—you who will see dispassionately those things that float before my eyes through a golden haze, looming large in the distance ?

Such is my confidence in your judgment, that you have but to say, 'Fool, give up thine El Dorados and stay at home—stick to the books and the desk—annihilate that redundance of animal life that is in thee—grow a mental machine—thy physical gifts are of no avail to thee—take thy place among the slaves of the Lamp'—and I will obey without a murmur. But if I am right—if I have in me attributes that here find no market; if my repinings are but the instincts of nature, that out of this decrepit civilisation, desire vent for growth in the young stir of some more rude and vigorous social system—then give me, I pray, that advice which may clothe my idea in some practical and tangible embodiments. Have I made myself understood?

"We take no newspaper here, but occasionally one finds its way from the parsonage; and I have lately rejoiced at a paragraph that spoke of your speedy entrance into the Administration as a thing certain. I write to you before you are a minister; and you see what I seek is not in the way of official patronage: A niche in an office!—oh, to me that were worse than all. Yet I did labour hard with you, but—*that* was different: I write to you thus frankly, knowing your warm noble heart—and as if you were my father. Allow me to add my humble but earnest congratulations on Miss Trevanion's approaching marriage with one worthy, if not of her, at least of her station. I do so as becomes one whom you have allowed to retain the right to pray for the happiness of you and yours.

"My dear Mr Trevanion, this is a long letter, and I

dare not even read it over, lest, if I do, I should not send it. Take it with all its faults, and judge of it with that kindness with which you have judged ever

"Your grateful and devoted servant,

"PISISTRATUS CAXTON."

LETTER FROM ALBERT TREVANION, ESQ., M.P., TO PISISTRATUS CAXTON.

Library of the House of Commons, Tuesday night.

"MY DEAR PISISTRATUS,—***** is up! we are in for it for two mortal hours. I take flight to the library, and devote those hours to you. Don't be conceited, but that picture of yourself which you have placed before me has struck me with all the force of an original. The state of mind which you describe so vividly must be a very common one, in our era of civilisation, yet I have never before seen it made so prominent and lifelike. You have been in my thoughts all day. Yes, how many young men must there be like you, in this Old World, able, intelligent, active, and persevering enough, yet not adapted for success in any of our conventional professions — 'mute, inglorious Raleighs.' Your letter, young artist, is an illustration of the philosophy of colonising. I comprehend better, after reading it, the old Greek colonisation,—the sending out not only the paupers, the refuse of an overpopulated state, but a large proportion of a better class —fellows full of pith and sap, and exuberant vitality,

like yourself, blending, in those wise *cleruchiæ*, a certain portion of the aristocratic with the more democratic element; not turning a rabble loose upon a new soil, but planting in the foreign allotments all the rudiments of a harmonious state, analogous to that in the mother country—not only getting rid of hungry craving mouths, but furnishing vent for a waste surplus of intelligence and courage, which at home is really not needed, and more often comes to ill than to good;—here only menaces our artificial embankments, but there, carried off in an aqueduct, might give life to a desert.

"For my part, in my ideal of colonisation, I should like that each exportation of human beings had, as of old, its leaders and chiefs—not so appointed from the mere quality of rank, often indeed taken from the humbler classes — but still men to whom a certain degree of education should give promptitude, quickness, *adaptability*—men in whom their followers can confide. The Greeks understood that. Nay, as the colony makes progress—as its principal town rises into the dignity of a capital—a *polis* that needs a polity—I sometimes think it might be wise to go still farther, and not only transplant to it a high standard of civilisation, but draw it more closely into connection with the parent state, and render the passage of spare intellect, education, and *civility*, to and fro, more facile, by drafting off thither the spare scions of royalty itself. I know that many of my more 'liberal' friends would poohpooh this notion; but I am sure that the colony altogether, when

arrived to a state that would bear the importation, would thrive all the better for it. And when the day shall come (as to all healthful colonies it must come sooner or later), in which the settlement has grown an independent state, we may thereby have laid the seeds of a constitution and a civilisation similar to our own—with self-developed forms of monarchy and aristocracy, though of a simpler growth than old societies accept, and not left a strange motley chaos of struggling democracy—an uncouth livid giant, at which the Frankenstein may well tremble—not because it is a giant, but because it is a giant half completed.* Depend on it, the New World will be friendly or hostile to the Old, *not in proportion to the kinship of race, but in proportion to the similarity of manners and institutions*—a mighty truth, to which we colonisers have been blind.

"Passing from these more distant speculations to this positive present before us, you see already, from what I have said, that I sympathise with your aspirations—that I construe them as you would have me;—looking to your nature and to your objects, I give you my advice in a word—EMIGRATE!

"My advice is, however, founded on one hypothesis—viz. that you are perfectly sincere—you will be contented with a rough life, and with a moderate fortune

* These pages were sent to press before the author had seen Mr Wakefield's recent work on Colonisation, wherein the views here expressed are enforced with great earnestness and conspicuous sagacity. The author is not the less pleased at this coincidence of opinion, because he has the misfortune to dissent from certain other parts of Mr Wakefield's elaborate theory.

at the end of your probation. Don't dream of emigrating if you want to make a million, or the tenth part of a million. Don't dream of emigrating, unless you can *enjoy* its hardships, — to *bear* them is not enough!

"Australia is the land for you, as you seem to surmise. Australia is the land for two classes of emigrants: 1st, The man who has nothing but his wits, and plenty of them; 2dly, The man who has a small capital, and who is contented to spend ten years in trebling it. I assume that you belong to the latter class. Take out £3000, and, before you are thirty years old, you may return with £10,000 or £12,000. If that satisfies you, think seriously of Australia. By coach, to-morrow, I will send you down all the best books and reports on the subject; and I will get you what detailed information I can from the Colonial Office. Having read these, and thought over them dispassionately, spend some months yet among the sheep-walks of Cumberland; learn all you can, from all the shepherds you can find — from Thyrsis to Menalcas. Do more; fit yourself in every way for a life in the Bush, where the philosophy of the division of labour is not yet arrived at. Learn to turn your hand to everything. Be something of a smith, something of a carpenter—do the best you can with the fewest tools; make yourself an excellent shot; break in all the wild horses and ponies you can borrow and beg. Even if you want to do none of these things when in your settlement, the having learned to do

them will fit you for many other things not now foreseen. *De-fine-gentlemanise* yourself from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot, and become the greater aristocrat for so doing; for he is more than an aristocrat, he is a king, who suffices in all things for himself—who is his own master, because he wants no *valetaille*. I think Seneca has expressed that thought before me; and I would quote the passage, but the book, I fear, is not in the library of the House of Commons. But now (cheers, by Jove! I suppose ***** is down! Ah! it is so; and C—— is up, and that cheer followed a sharp hit at me. How I wish I were your age, and going to Australia with you!)—But now—to resume my suspended period—but now to the important point—capital. You must take that, unless you go as a shepherd, and then good-by to the idea of £10,000 in ten years. So, you see, it appears at the first blush that you must still come to your father; but, you will say, with this difference, that you borrow the capital with every chance of repaying it, instead of frittering away the income year after year till you are eight-and-thirty or forty at least. Still, Pisistratus, you don't, in this, gain your object at a leap; and my dear old friend ought not to lose his son and his money too. You say you write to me as to your own father. You know I hate professions; and if you did not mean what you say, you have offended me mortally. As a father, then, I take a father's rights, and speak plainly. A friend of mine, Mr Bolding, a clergyman, has a son —a wild fellow, who is likely to get into all sorts of

scrapes in England, but with plenty of good in him, notwithstanding—frank, bold—not wanting in talent, but rather in prudence—easily tempted and led away into extravagance. He would make a capital colonist (no such temptations in the Bush !) if tied to a youth like you. Now I propose, with your leave, that his father shall advance him £1500, which shall not, however, be placed in his hands, but in yours, as head partner in the firm. You, on your side, shall advance the same sum of £1500, which you shall borrow from me, for three years without interest. At the end of that time interest shall commence ; and the capital, with the interest on the said first three years, shall be repaid to me, or my executors, on your return. After you have been a year or two in the Bush, and felt your way, and learned your business, you may then safely borrow £1500 more from your father ; and, in the meanwhile, you and your partner will have had together the full sum of £3000 to commence with. You see in this proposal I make you no gift, and I run no risk, even by your death. If you die insolvent, I will promise to come on your father, poor fellow !—for small joy and small care will he have then in what may be left of his fortune. There—I have said all ; and I will never forgive you if you reject an aid that will serve you so much, and cost me so little.

"I accept your congratulations on Fanny's engagement with Lord Castleton. When you return from Australia you will still be a young man, she (though about your own years) almost a middle-aged woman,

with her head full of pomps and vanities. All girls have a short period of girlhood in common; but when they enter womanhood, the woman becomes the woman of her class. As for me, and the office assigned to me by report, you know what I said when we parted, and —but here J—— comes, and tells me that 'I am expected to speak, and answer N——, who is just up, brimful of malice,'—the House crowded, and hungering for personalities. So I, the man of the Old World, gird up my loins, and leave you with a sigh, to the fresh youth of the New—

"'Ne tibi sit duros acuisse in prœlia dentes.'

"Yours affectionately,

"ALBERT TREVANION."

CHAPTER VII.

So, reader, thou art now at the secret of my heart.

Wonder not that I, a bookman's son, and, at certain periods of my life, a bookman myself, though of lowly grade in that venerable class—wonder not that I should thus, in that transition stage between youth and manhood, have turned impatiently from books.—Most students, at one time or other in their existence, have felt the imperious demand of that restless principle in man's nature, which calls upon each son of Adam to contribute his share to the vast treasury of human deeds. And though great scholars are not necessarily, nor usually, men of action,—yet the men of action whom History presents to our survey, have rarely been without a certain degree of scholarly nurture. For the ideas which books quicken, books cannot always satisfy. And though the royal pupil of Aristotle slept with Homer under his pillow, it was not that he might dream of composing epics, but of conquering new Ilions in the East. Many a man, how little soever resembling Alexander, may still have the conqueror's aim in an object that action only can achieve, and the book under his pillow may be the strongest antidote to his

repose. And how the stern Destinies that shall govern the man weave their first delicate tissues amidst the earliest associations of the child!—Those idle tales with which the old credulous nurse had beguiled my infancy—tales of wonder, knight-errantry, and adventure, had left behind them seeds long latent—seeds that might never have sprung up above the soil—but that my boyhood was so early put under the burning-glass, and in the quick forcing-house, of the London world. There, even amidst books and study, lively observation and petulant ambition broke forth from the lush foliage of romance—that fruitless leafiness of poetic youth! And there passion, which is a revolution in all the elements of individual man, had called a new state of being, turbulent and eager, out of the old habits and conventional forms it had buried—ashes that speak where the fire has been. Far from me, as from any mind of some manliness, be the attempt to create interest by dwelling at length on the struggles against a rash and misplaced attachment, which it was my duty to overcome; but all such love, as I have before implied, is a terrible unsettler:—

"Where once such fairies dance, no grass doth ever grow."

To re-enter boyhood, go with meek docility through its disciplined routine—how hard had I found that return, amidst the cloistered monotony of college! My love for my father, and my submission to his wish, had indeed given some animation to objects otherwise distasteful; but, now that my return to the University

must be attended with positive privation to those at home, the idea became utterly hateful and repugnant. Under pretence that I found myself, on trial, not yet sufficiently prepared to do credit to my father's name, I had easily obtained leave to lose the ensuing college term, and pursue my studies at home. This gave me time to prepare my plans, and bring round—how shall I ever bring round to my adventurous views those whom I propose to desert? Hard it is to get on in the world—very hard! But the most painful step in the way is that which starts from the threshold of a beloved home.

How—ah, how, indeed! "No, Blanche, you cannot join me to-day; I am going out for many hours. So it will be late before I can be home."

Home!—the word chokes me! Juba slinks back to his young mistress, disconsolate; Blanche gazes at me ruefully from our favourite hill-top, and the flowers she has been gathering fall unheeded from her basket. I hear my mother's voice singing low, as she sits at work by her open casement. How,—ah, how indeed!

PART THIRTEENTH.

CHAPTER I.

St Chrysostom, in his work on The Priesthood, defends deceit, if for a good purpose, by many Scriptural examples; ends his first book by asserting that it is often necessary, and that much benefit may arise from it; and begins his second book by saying that it ought not to be called, *deceit* but *good management.**

Good management, then, let me call the innocent arts by which I now sought to insinuate my project into favour and assent with my unsuspecting family. At first I began with Roland. I easily induced him to read some of the books, full of the charm of Australian life, which Trevanion had sent me; and so happily did those descriptions suit his own erratic tastes, and the free half-savage man that lay rough and large within that soldierly nature, that he himself, as it were, seemed to suggest my own ardent desire—sighed, as the care-worn Trevanion had done, that "he was not my age, and blew the flame that consumed me

* Hohler's Translation.

with his own willing breath. So that when at last—wandering one day over the wild moors—I said, knowing his hatred of law and lawyers—"Alas, uncle, that nothing should be left for me but the bar!" Captain Roland struck his cane into the peat, and exclaimed, "Zounds, sir! the bar and lying, with truth and a world fresh from God before you!"

"Your hand, uncle—we understand each other. Now help me with those two quiet hearts at home!"

"Plague on my tongue! what have I done?" said the Captain, looking aghast. Then, after musing a little time, he turned his dark eye on me, and growled out, "I suspect, young sir, you have been laying a trap for me; and I have fallen into it, like an old fool as I am."

"Oh, sir, if you prefer the bar!——"

"Rogue!"

"Or, indeed, I might perhaps get a clerkship in a merchant's office?"

"If you do, I will scratch you out of the pedigree!"

"Huzza, then, for Australasia!"

"Well, well, well," said my uncle,

"With a smile on his lip, and a tear in his eye;"

"the old sea-king's blood will force its way—a soldier or a rover, there is no other choice for you. We shall mourn and miss you; but who can chain the young eagles to the eyrie?"

I had a harder task with my father, who at first seemed to listen to me as if I had been talking of an

excursion to the moon. But I threw in a dexterous dose of the old Greek *Cleruchiæ*—cited by Trevanion —which set him off full trot on his hobby, till after a short excursion to Eubœa and the Chersonese, he was fairly lost amidst the Ionian colonies of Asia Minor. I then gradually and artfully decoyed him into his favourite science of Ethnology; and while he was speculating on the origin of the American savages, and considering the rival claims of Cimmerians, Israelites, and Scandinavians, I said quietly, "And you sir, who think that all human improvement depends on the mixture of races—you, whose whole theory is an absolute sermon upon emigration, and the transplanting and interpolity of our species—you, sir, should be the last man to chain your son, your elder son, to the soil, while your younger is the very missionary of rovers."

"Pisistratus," said my father, "you reason by *synecdoche*—ornamental but illogical;" and therewith, resolved to hear no more, my father rose and retreated into his study.

But his observation, now quickened, began from that day to follow my moods and humours—then he himself grew silent and thoughtful, and finally he took to long conferences with Roland. The result was that, one evening in spring, as I lay listless amidst the weeds and fern that sprang up through the melancholy ruins, I felt a hand on my shoulder; and my father, seating himself beside me on a fagment of stone. said earnestly, "Pisistratus, let us talk—I had hoped better things from your study of Robert Hall."

"Nay, dear father, the medicine did me great good: I have not repined since, and I look steadfastly and cheerfully on life. But Robert Hall fulfilled his mission, and I would fulfil mine."

"Is there no mission in thy native land, O planeticose and exallotriote spirit?" * asked my father, with compassionate rebuke.

"Alas, yes! But what the impulse of genius is to the great, the instinct of vocation is to the mediocre. In every man there is a magnet; in that thing which the man can do best there is a loadstone."

"Papæ!" said my father, opening his eyes; "and are no loadstones to be found for you nearer than the Great Australasian Bight?"

"Ah, sir, if you resort to irony I can say no more!" My father looked down on me tenderly, as I hung my head, moody and abashed.

"Son," said he, "do you think that there is any real jest at my heart, when the matter discussed is whether you are to put wide seas and long years between us?" I pressed nearer to his side, and made no answer.

"But I have noted you of late," continued my father, "and I have observed that your old studies are grown distasteful to you; and I have talked with Roland, and I see that your desire is deeper than a boy's mere whim. And then I have asked myself what prospect I can hold out at home to induce you to be contented here, and I see none; and therefore, I should say to

* Words coined by Mr Caxton from πλανητικός, disposed to roaming, and ἐξαλλοτριόω, to export—to alienate.

you, "Go thy ways, and God shield thee—but, Pisistratus, *your mother!*"

"Ah, sir, that is indeed the question! and there indeed I shrink. But, after all, whatever I were—whether toiling at the bar, or in some public office—I should be still so much from home and her. And then you, sir, she loves *you* so entirely, that——"

"No," interrupted my father; "you can advance no arguments like these to touch a mother's heart. There is but one argument that comes home there—is it for your good to leave her? If so, there will be no need of further words. But let us not decide that question hastily; let you and I be together the next two months. Bring your books and sit with me; when you want to go out, tap me on the shoulder, and say 'Come.' At the end of those two months I will say to you 'Go,' or 'Stay.' And you will trust me; and if I say the last, you will submit?"

"Oh yes, sir—yes!"

CHAPTER II.

This compact made, my father roused himself from all his studies—devoted his whole thoughts to me—sought with all his gentle wisdom to wean me imperceptibly from my one fixed tyrannical idea,—ranged through his wide pharmacy of books for such medicaments as might alter the system of my thoughts. And little thought he that his very tenderness and wisdom worked against him, for at each new instance of either my heart called aloud, "Is it not that thy tenderness may be repaid, and thy wisdom be known abroad, that I go from thee into the strange land, O my father!"

And the two months expired, and my father saw that the magnet had turned unalterably to the loadstone in the great Australasian Bight; and he said to me, "Go, and comfort your mother. I have told her your wish, and authorised it by my consent, for I believe now that it *is* for your good."

I found my mother in the little room she had appropriated to herself next my father's study. And in that room there was a pathos which I have no words to express; for my mother's meek, gentle, womanly soul spoke there, so that it was the Home of Home. The

care with which she had transplanted from the brick house, and lovingly arranged, all the humble memorials of old times, dear to her affections—the black silhouette of my father's profile cut in paper, in the full pomp of academics, cap and gown (how had he ever consented to sit for it!) framed and glazed in the place of honour over the little hearth; and boyish sketches of mine at the Hellenic Institute, first essays in sepia and Indian ink, to animate the walls, and bring her back, when she sat there in the twilight, musing alone, to sunny hours, when Sisty and the young mother threw daisies at each other;—and covered with a great glass shade, and dusted each day with her own hand, the flower-pot Sisty had bought with the proceeds of the domino-box, on that memorable occasion on which he had learned "how bad deeds are repaid with good." There, in one corner, stood the little cottage piano, which I remembered all my life—old-fashioned, and with the jingling voice of approaching decrepitude, but still associated with such melodies as, after childhood, we hear never more! And in the modest hanging shelves, which looked so gay with ribbons, and tassels, and silken cords—my mother's own library, saying more to the heart than all the cold wise poets whose souls my father invoked in his grand Heraclea. The Bible over which, with eyes yet untaught to read, I had hung in vague awe and love, as it lay open on my mother's lap, while her sweet voice, then only serious, was made the oracle of its truths. And my first lesson-books was there, all hoarded. And

bound in blue and gold, but elaborately papered up, *Cowper's Poems*—a gift from my father in the days of courtship—sacred treasure, which not even I had the privilege to touch; and which my mother took out only in the great crosses and trials of conjugal life, whenever some words less kind than usual had dropped unawares from her scholar's absent lips. Ah! all these poor household gods, all seemed to look on me with mild anger; and from all came a voice to my soul, "Cruel, dost thou forsake us!" And amongst them sat my mother, desolate as Rachel, and weeping silently.

"Mother! mother!" I cried, falling on her neck, "forgive me—it is past—I cannot leave you!"

CHAPTER III.

"No—no! it is for your good—Austin says so. Go—it is but the first shock."

Then to my mother I opened the sluices of that deep I had concealed from scholar and soldier. To her I poured all the wild, restless thoughts which wandered through the ruins of love destroyed—to her I confessed what to myself I had scarcely before avowed. And when the picture of that, the darker, side of my mind was shown, it was with a prouder face, and less broken voice, that I spoke of the manlier hopes and nobler aims that gleamed across the wrecks and the desert, and showed me my escape.

"Did you not once say, mother, that you had felt it like a remorse, that my father's genius passed so noiselessly away,—half accusing the happiness you gave him for the death of his ambition in the content of his mind? Did you not feel a new object in life when the ambition revived at last, and you thought you heard the applause of the world murmuring round your scholar's cell? Did you not share in the day-dreams your brother conjured up, and exclaim, 'If *my* brother could be the means of raising *him* in the world!' and when

you thought we had found the way to fame and fortune, did you not sob out from your full heart, 'And it is *my* brother who will pay back to *his* son—all—all he gave up for me?'"

"I cannot bear this, Sisty!—cease, cease!"

"No; for do you not yet understand me? Will it not be better still, if *your son*—yours—restore to your Austin all that he lost, no matter how? If through your son, mother, you do indeed make the world hear of your husband's genius—restore the spring to his mind, the glory to his pursuits—if you rebuild even that vaunted ancestral name, which is glory to our poor sonless Roland—if your son can restore the decay of generations, and reconstruct from the dust the whole house into which you have entered, its meek presiding angel?—ah, mother! if this can be done, it will be your work; for unless you can share my ambition—unless you can dry those eyes, and smile in my face, and bid me go, with a cheerful voice—all my courage melts from my heart, and again I say, I cannot leave you!"

Then my mother folded her arms round me, and we both wept, and could not speak—but we were both happy.

CHAPTER IV.

Now the worst was over, and my mother was the most heroic of us all. So I began to prepare myself in good earnest, and I followed Trevanion's instructions with a perseverance which I could never, at that young day, have thrown into the dead life of books. I was in a good school, amongst our Cumberland sheep-walks, to learn those simple elements of rural art which belong to the pastoral state. Mr Sidney, in his admirable *Australian Handbook*, recommends young gentlemen who think of becoming settlers in the Bush to bivouac for three months on Salisbury Plain. That book was not then written, or I might have taken the advice; meanwhile I think, with due respect to such authority, that I went through a preparatory training quite as useful in seasoning the future emigrant. I associated readily with the kindly peasants and craftsmen, who became my teachers. With what pride I presented my father with a desk, and my mother with a workbox, fashioned by my own hands! I made Bolt a lock for his plate-chest, and (that last was *my* magnum opus, my great masterpiece) I repaired and absolutely set going an old turret-clock in the tower, that had stood

at 2 P.M. since the memory of man. I loved to think, each time the hour sounded, that those who heard its deep chime would remember me. But the flocks were my main care: the sheep that I tended and helped to shear, and the lamb that I hooked out of the great marsh, and the three venerable ewes that I nursed through a mysterious sort of murrain, which puzzled all the neighbourhood—are they not written in thy loving chronicles, O House of Caxton!

And now, since much of the success of my experiment must depend on the friendly terms I could establish with my intended partner, I wrote to Trevanion, begging him to get the young gentleman who was to join me, and whose capital I was to administer, to come and visit us. Trevanion complied, and there arrived a tall fellow, somewhat more than six feet high, answering to the name of Guy Bolding, in a cut-away sporting-coat, with a dog-whistle tied to the button-hole; drab shorts and gaiters, and a waistcoat with all manner of strange furtive pockets. Guy Bolding had lived a year and a half at Oxford as a "fast man;" so "fast" had he lived, that there was scarcely a tradesman at Oxford into whose books he had not contrived to run.

His father was compelled to withdraw him from the university, at which he had already had the honour of being plucked for "the little go;" and the young gentleman, on being asked for what profession he was fit, had replied with conscious pride, "That he could tool a coach!" In despair, the sire, who owed his living to Trevanion, had asked the statesman's advice,

and the advice had fixed me with a partner in expatriation.

My first feeling in greeting the "fast" man was certainly that of deep disappointment and strong repugnance. But I was determined not to be too fastidious; and having a lucky knack of suiting myself pretty well to all tempers (without which a man had better not think of loadstones in the great Australasian Bight), I contrived before the first week was out to establish so many points of connection between us, that we became the best friends in the world. Indeed, it would have been my fault if we had not, for Guy Bolding, with all his faults, was one of those excellent creatures who are nobody's enemies but their own. His good-humour was inexhaustible. Not a hardship or privation came amiss to him. He had a phrase "Such fun!" that always rushed laughingly to his lips when another man would have cursed and groaned. If we lost our way in the great trackless moors, missed our dinner, and were half-famished, Guy rubbed hands that would have felled an ox, and chuckled out, "Such fun!" If we stuck in a bog, if we were caught in a thunderstorm, if we were pitched head-over-heels by the wild colts we undertook to break in, Guy Bolding's sole elegy was "Such fun!" That grand shibboleth of philosophy only forsook him at the sight of an open book. I don't think that, at that time, he could have found "fun" even in Don Quixote. This hilarious temperament had no insensibility; a kinder heart never beat, —but, to be sure, it beat to a strange, restless, taran-

tula sort of measure, which kept it in a perpetual dance. It made him one of those officiously good fellows, who are never quiet themselves, and never let any one else be quiet if they can help it. But Guy's great fault, in this prudent world, was his absolute incontinence of money. If you had turned a Euphrates of gold into his pockets at morning, it would have been as dry as the great Sahara by twelve at noon. What he did with the money was a mystery as much to himself as to every one else. His father said in a letter to me, that "he had seen him shying at sparrows with half-crowns!" That such a young man could come to no good in England seemed perfectly clear. Still, it is recorded of many great men, who did not end their days in a workhouse, that they were equally non-retentive of money. Schiller, when he had nothing else to give away, gave the clothes from his back, and Goldsmith the blankets from his bed. Tender hands found it necessary to pick Beethoven's pockets at home before he walked out. Great heroes, who have made no scruple of robbing the whole world, have been just as lavish as poor poets and musicians. Alexander, in parcelling out his spoils, left himself "hope!" And as for Julius Cæsar, he was two millions in debt when he shied his last half-crown at the sparrows in Gaul. Encouraged by these illustrious examples, I had hopes of Guy Bolding; and the more as he was so aware of his own infirmity that he was perfectly contented with the arrangement which made me treasurer of his capital, and even besought me, on no account, let him beg ever

so hard, to permit his own money to come in his own way. In fact, I contrived to gain a great ascendancy over his simple, generous, thoughtless nature; and by artful appeals to his affections—to all he owed to his father for many bootless sacrifices, and to the duty of providing a little dower for his infant sister, whose meditated portion had half gone to pay his college debts—I at last succeeded in fixing into his mind an object to save for.

Three other companions did I select for our Cleruchia. The first was the son of our old shepherd, who had lately married, but was not yet encumbered with children,—a good shepherd, and an intelligent, steady fellow. The second was a very different character; he had been the dread of the whole squirearchy. A more bold and dexterous poacher did not exist. Now my acquaintance with this latter person, named Will Peterson, and more popularly "Will o' the Wisp," had commenced thus:—Bolt had managed to rear in a small copse about a mile from the house—and which was the only bit of ground in my uncle's domains that might by courtesy be called "a wood"—a young colony of pheasants, that he dignified by the title of a "preserve." This colony was audaciously despoiled and grievously depopulated, in spite of two watchers, who, with Bolt, guarded for seven nights successively the slumbers of the infant settlement. So insolent was the assault, that bang, bang, went the felonious gun—behind, before—within but a few yards of the sentinels

—and the gunner was off, and the prey seized, before they could rush to the spot. The boldness and skill of the enemy soon proclaimed him, to the experienced watchers, to be Will o' the Wisp: and so great was their dread of this fellow's strength and courage, and so complete their despair of being a match for his swiftness and cunning, that after the seventh night the watchers refused to go out any longer; and poor Bolt himself was confined to his bed by an attack of what a doctor would have called rheumatism, and a moralist, rage. My indignation and sympathy were greatly excited by this mortifying failure, and my interest romantically aroused by the anecdotes I had heard of Will o' the Wisp; accordingly, armed with a thick bludgeon, I stole out at night, and took my way to the copse. The leaves were not off the trees, and how the poacher contrived to see his victims I know not; but five shots did he fire, and not in vain, without allowing me to catch a glimpse of him. I then retreated to the outskirt of the copse, and waited patiently by an angle, which commanded two sides of the wood. Just as the dawn began to peep, I saw my man emerge within twenty yards of me. I held my breath, suffered him to get a few steps from the wood, crept on so as to intercept his retreat, and then pounce—such a bound! My hand was on his shoulder—prr, prr,—no eel was ever more lubricate. He slid from me like a thing immaterial, and was off over the moors with a swiftness which might well have baffled any clodhopper—a race whose calves are generally absorbed in the soles of their

hobnail shoes. But the Hellenic Institute, with its classical gymnasia, had trained its pupils in all bodily exercises; and though the Will o' the Wisp was swift for a clodhopper, he was no match at running for any youth who has spent his boyhood in the discipline of cricket, prisoner's bar, and hunt-the-hare. I reached him at length, and brought him to bay.

"Stand back!" said he, panting, and taking aim with his gun: "it is loaded."

"Yes," said I; "but though you're a brave poacher, you dare not fire at your fellow-man. Give up the gun this instant."

My address took him by surprise; he did not fire. I struck up the barrel, and closed on him. We grappled pretty tightly, and in the wrestle the gun went off. The man loosened his hold. "Lord ha' mercy! I have not hurt you?" he said, falteringly.

"My good fellow—no," said I; "and now let us throw aside gun and bludgeon, and fight it out like Englishmen, or else let us sit down and talk over it like friends."

The Will o' the Wisp scratched its head and laughed.

"Well, you're a queer one!" quoth it. And the poacher dropped the gun and sat down.

We did talk it over, and I obtained Peterson's promise to respect the preserve henceforth; and we thereon grew so cordial that he walked home with me, and even presented me, shyly and apologetically, with the five pheasants he had shot. From that time I

sought him out. He was a young fellow not four-and-twenty, who had taken to poaching from the wild sport of the thing, and from some confused notions that he had a licence from Nature to poach. I soon found out that he was meant for better things than to spend six months of the twelve in prison, and finish his life on the gallows after killing a gamekeeper. That seemed to me his most probable destiny in the Old World, so I talked him into a burning desire for the New one : and a most valuable aid in the Bush he proved too.

My third selection was in a personage who could bring little physical strength to help us, but who had more mind (though with a wrong twist in it) than both the others put together.

A worthy couple in the village had a son, who being slight and puny, compared to the Cumberland breed, was shouldered out of the market of agricultural labour, and went off, yet a boy, to a manufacturing town. Now about the age of thirty, this mechanic, disabled for his work by a long illness, came home to recover ; and in a short time we heard of nothing but the pestilential doctrines with which he was either shocking or infecting our primitive villagers. According to report, Corcyra itself never engendered a democrat more awful. The poor man was really very ill, and his parents very poor ; but his unfortunate doctrines dried up all the streams of charity that usually flowed through our kindly hamlet. The clergyman (an excellent man, but of the old school) walked by the house as if it were tabooed. The apothecary said, "Miles Square ought

to have wine;" but he did not send him any. The farmers held his name in execration, for he had incited all their labourers to strike for another shilling a-week. And but for the old Tower, Miles Square would soon have found his way to the only republic in which he could obtain that democratic fraternisation for which he sighed — the grave being, I suspect, the sole commonwealth which attains that dead flat of social equality that life in its every principle so heartily abhors.

My uncle went to see Miles Square, and came back the colour of purple. Miles Square had preached him a long sermon on the unholiness of war. "Even in defence of your king and country?" had roared the Captain; and Miles Square had replied with a remark upon kings in general, that the Captain could not have repeated without expecting to see the old Tower fall about his ears; and with an observation about the country in particular, to the effect that "the country would be much better off if it *were* conquered!" On hearing the report of these loyal and patriotic replies, my father said "Papæ!" and, roused out of his usual philosophical indifference, went himself to visit Miles Square. My father returned as pale as my uncle had been purple. "And to think," said he mournfully, "that in the town whence this man comes, there are, he tells me, ten thousand other of God's creatures who speed the work of civilisation while execrating its laws!"

But neither father nor uncle made any opposition

when, with a basket laden with wine and arrow-root, and a neat little Bible, bound in brown, my mother took her way to the excommunicated cottage. Her visit was as signal a failure as those that preceded it. Miles Square refused the basket; "he was not going to accept alms, and eat the bread of charity;" and on my mother meekly suggesting that, "if Mr Miles Square would condescend to look into the Bible, he would see that even charity was no sin in giver or recipient." Mr Miles Square had undertaken to prove, "that, according to the Bible, he had as much a right to my mother's property as she had—that all things should be in common—and, when all things were in common, what became of charity? No; he could not eat my uncle's arrow-root, and drink his wine, while my uncle was improperly withholding from him and his fellow-creatures so many unprofitable acres: the land belonged to the people." It was now the turn of Pisistratus to go. He went once, and he went often. Miles Square and Pisistratus wrangled and argued—argued and wrangled—and ended by taking a fancy to each other; for this poor Miles Square was not half so bad as his doctrines. His errors arose from intense sympathy with the sufferings he had witnessed, amidst the misery which accompanies the reign of *millocratism*, and from the vague aspirations of a half-taught, impassioned, earnest nature. By degrees, I persuaded him to drink the wine and eat the arrow-root, *en attendant* that millennium which was to restore the land to the people. And then my mother came again and softened his heart, and, for the first time

in his life, let into its cold crotchets the warm light of human gratitude. I lent him some books, amongst others a few volumes on Australia. A passage in one of the latter, in which it was said "that an intelligent mechanic usually made his way in the colony, even as a shepherd, better than a dull agricultural labourer," caught hold of his fancy, and seduced his aspirations into a healthful direction. Finally, as he recovered, he entreated me to let him accompany me. And as I may not have to return to Miles Square, I think it right here to state, that he did go with me to Australia, and did succeed, first as a shepherd, next as a superintendant, and finally, on saving money, as a landowner; and that, in spite of his opinions of the unholiness of war, he was no sooner in possession of a comfortable log homestead, than he defended it with uncommon gallantry against an attack of the aborigines, whose right to the soil was, to say the least of it, as good as his claim to my uncle's acres; that he commemorated his subsequent acquisition of a fresh allotment, with the stock on it, by a little pamphlet, published at Sydney, on the *Sanctity of the Rights of Property;* and that, when I left the colony, having been much pestered by two refractory "helps" that he had added to his establishment, he had just distinguished himself by a very anti-levelling lecture upon the duties of servants to their employers. What would the Old World have done for this man!

CHAPTER V.

I HAD not been in haste to conclude my arrangements, for, independently of my wish to render myself acquainted with the small useful crafts that might be necessary to me in a life that makes the individual man a state in himself, I naturally desired to habituate my kindred to the idea of our separation, and to plan and provide for them all such substitutes or distractions, in compensation for my loss, as my fertile imagination could suggest. At first, for the sake of Blanche, Roland, and my mother, I talked the Captain into reluctant sanction of his sister-in-law's proposal, to unite their incomes and share alike, without considering which party brought the larger proportion into the firm. I represented to him that, unless he made that sacrifice of his pride, my mother would be wholly without those little notable uses and objects, those small household pleasures, so dear to woman; that all society in the neighbourhood would be impossible, and that my mother's time would hang so heavily on her hands, that her only resource would be to muse on the absent one, and fret. Nay, if he persisted in so false a pride, I told him, fairly, that I should urge my father to leave the Tower.

These representations succeeded, and hospitality had commenced in the old hall, and a knot of gossips had centred round my mother—groups of laughing children had relaxed the still brow of Blanche—and the Captain himself was a more cheerful and social man. My next point was to engage my father in the completion of the Great Book. "Ah, sir," said I, "give me an inducement to toil, a reward for my industry. Let me think, in each tempting pleasure, each costly vice—No, no; I will save for the Great Book! and the memory of the father shall still keep the son from error. Ah, look you, sir! Mr Trevanion offered me the loan of the £1500 necessary to commence with; but you generously and at once said—'No; you must not begin life under the load of debt.' And I knew you were right and yielded—yielded the more gratefully that I could not but forfeit something of the just pride of manhood in incurring such an obligation to the father of—Miss Trevanion. Therefore I have taken that sum from you—a sum that would almost have sufficed to establish your younger and worthier child in the world for ever. To that child let me repay it, otherwise I will not take it. Let me hold it as a trust for the Great Book; and promise me that the Great Book shall be ready when your wanderer returns, and accounts for the missing talent."

And my father pished a little, and rubbed off the dew that had gathered on his spectacles. But I would not leave him in peace till he had given me his word that the Great Book should go on *à pas du géant*—

nay, till I had seen him sit down to it with good heart, and the wheel went round again in the quiet mechanism of that gentle life.

Finally, and as the culminating acme of my diplomacy, I effected the purchase of the neighbouring apothecary's practice and good-will for Squills, upon terms which he willingly subscribed to; for the poor man had pined at the loss of his favourite patients, though, Heaven knows, they did not add much to his income. And as for my father, there was no man who diverted him more than Squills, though he accused him of being a materialist, and set his whole spiritual pack of sages to worry and bark at him, from Plato and Zeno to Reid and Abraham Tucker.

Thus, although I have very loosely intimated the flight of time, more than a whole year elapsed from the date of our settlement at the Tower and that fixed for my departure.

In the meanwhile, despite the rarity amongst us of that phenomenon, a newspaper, we were not so utterly cut off from the sounds of the far-booming world beyond, but what the intelligence of a change in the administration and the appointment of Mr Trevanion to one of the great offices of state reached our ears. I had kept up no correspondence with Trevanion subsequent to the letter that occasioned Guy Bolding's visit; I wrote now to congratulate him: his reply was short and hurried.

An intelligence that startled me more, and more deeply moved my heart, was conveyed to me, some

three months or so before my departure, by Trevanion's steward. The ill-health of Lord Castleton had deferred his marriage, intended originally to be celebrated as soon as he arrived of age. He left the university with the honours of "a double first class;" and his constitution appeared to rally from the effects of studies more severe to him than they might have been to a man of quicker and more brilliant capacities—when a feverish cold, caught at a county meeting, in which his first public appearance was so creditable as fully to justify the warmest hopes of his party, produced inflammation of the lungs, and ended fatally. The startling contrast forced on my mind—here, sudden death and cold clay—there, youth in its first flower, princely rank, boundless wealth, the sanguine expectation of an illustrious career, and the prospect of that happiness which smiled from the eyes of Fanny—that contrast impressed me with a strange awe: death seems so near to us when it strikes those whom life most flatters and caresses. Whence is that curious sympathy that we all have with the possessors of worldly greatness, when the hour-glass is shaken and the scythe descends? If the famous meeting between Diogenes and Alexander had taken place not before, but after the achievements which gave to Alexander the name of Great, the cynic would not, perhaps, have envied the hero his pleasures nor his splendours—neither the charms of Statira nor the tiara of the Mede; but if, the day after, a cry had gone forth, "Alexander the Great is dead!" verily I believe that Diogenes would have coiled himself up in

his tub, and felt that with the shadow of the stately hero, something of glory and of warmth had gone from that sun, which it should darken never more. In the nature of man, the humblest or the hardest, there is a something that lives in all of the Beautiful or the Fortunate, which hope and desire have appropriated, even in the vanities of a childish dream.

CHAPTER VI.

"Why are you here all alone, cousin? How cold and still it is amongst the graves!"

"Sit down beside me, Blanche; it is not colder in the churchyard than on the village green."

And Blanche sat down beside me, nestled close to me, and leant her head upon my shoulder. We were both long silent. It was an evening in the early spring, clear and serene—the roseate streaks were fading gradually from the dark grey of long, narrow, fantastic clouds. Tall, leafless poplars, that stood in orderly level line, on the lowland between the churchyard and the hill, with its crown of ruins, left their sharp summits distinct against the sky. But the shadows coiled dull and heavy round the evergreens that skirted the churchyard, so that their outline was vague and confused; and there was a depth in that lonely stillness, broken only when the thrush flew out from the lower bushes, and the thick laurel leaves stirred reluctantly, and again were rigid in repose. There is a certain melancholy in the evenings of early spring, which is among those influences of Nature the most universally recognised, the most difficult to explain. The silent

stir of reviving life, which does not yet betray signs in the bud and blossom—only in a softer clearness in the air, a more lingering pause in the slowly lengthening day; a more delicate freshness and balm in the twilight atmosphere; a more lively, yet still unquiet note from the birds, settling down into their coverts;—the vague sense under all that hush, which still outwardly wears the bleak sterility of winter—of the busy change, hourly, momently, at work—renewing the youth of the world, reclothing with vigorous bloom the skeletons of things—all these messages from the heart of Nature to the heart of Man—may well affect and move us. But why with melancholy? No thought on our part connects and construes the low, gentle voices. It is not *thought* that replies and reasons: it is *feeling* that hears and dreams. Examine not, O child of man!—examine not that mysterious melancholy with the hard eyes of thy reason; thou canst not impale it on the spikes of thy thorny logic, nor describe its enchanted circle by problems conned from thy schools. Borderer thyself of two worlds—the Dead and the Living—give thine ear to the tones, bow thy soul to the shadows, that steal, in the Season of Change, from the dim Border Land.

BLANCHE (in a whisper).—"What are you thinking of?—speak, pray!"

PISISTRATUS.—"I was not thinking, Blanche; or, if I were, the thought is gone at the mere effort to seize or detain it."

BLANCHE (after a pause).—"I know what you mean.

It is the same with me often—so often, when I am sitting by myself, quite still. It is just like the story Primmins was telling us the other evening, 'how there was a woman in her village who saw things and people in a piece of crystal not bigger than my hand: * they passed along as large as life, but they were only pictures in the crystal.' Since I heard the story, when aunt asks me what I am thinking of, I long to say, 'I'm not thinking! I am seeing pictures in the crystal!'"

PISISTRATUS.—"Tell my father *that;* it will please him. There is more philosophy in it than you are aware of, Blanche. There are wise men who have thought the whole world, its 'pride, pomp, and circumstance,' only a phantom image—a picture in the crystal."

BLANCHE.—"And I shall see you—see us both, as we are sitting here—and that star which has just risen yonder—see it all in my crystal—when you are gone! —gone, cousin!" (And Blanche's head drooped.)

There was something so quiet and deep in the tenderness of this poor motherless child, that it did not affect

* In primitive villages, in the west of England, the belief that the absent may be seen in a piece of crystal is, or was not many years ago, by no means an uncommon superstition. I have seen more than one of these magic mirrors, which Spenser, by the way, has beautifully described. They are about the size and shape of a swan's egg. It is not every one, however, who can be a crystal-seer; like second-sight, it is a special gift. *N. B.*—Since the above note (appended to the first edition of this work) was written, crystals and crystal-seers have become very familiar to those who interest themselves in speculations upon the disputed phenomena ascribed to Mesmerical *Clairvoyance.*

one superficially, like a child's loud momentary affection, in which we know that the first toy will replace us. I kissed my little cousin's pale face, and said, "And I too, Blanche, have my crystal; and when I consult it, I shall be very angry if I see you sad and fretting, or seated alone. For you must know, Blanche, that that is all selfishness. God made us, not to indulge only in crystal pictures, weave idle fancies, pine alone, and mourn over what we cannot help—but to be alert and active—givers of happiness. Now, Blanche, see what a trust I am going to bequeath you. You are to supply my place to all whom I leave. You are to bring sunshine wherever you glide with that shy, soft step—whether to your father, when you see his brows knit and his arms crossed (that, indeed, you always do), or to mine, when the volume drops from his hand—when he walks to and fro the room, restless, and murmuring to himself—then you are to steal up to him, put your hand in his, lead him back to his books, and whisper, 'What will Sisty say if his younger brother, the Great Book, is not grown up when he comes back?'—And my poor mother, Blanche!—ah, how can I counsel you there—how tell you where to find comfort for her? Only, Blanche, steal into her heart and be her daughter. And, to fulfil this threefold trust, you must not content yourself with seeing pictures in the crystal—do you understand me?"

"Oh yes," said Blanche, raising her eyes, while the tears rolled from them, and folding her arms resolutely on her breast.

"And so," said I, "as we two, sitting in this quiet burial-ground, take new heart for the duties and cares of life, so see, Blanche, how the stars come out, one by one, to smile upon us; for they, too, glorious orbs as they are, perform their appointed tasks. Things seem to approximate to God in proportion to their vitality and movement. Of all things, least inert and sullen should be the soul of man. How the grass grows up over the very graves—quickly it grows and greenly—but neither so quick nor so green, my Blanche, as hope and comfort from human sorrows."

PART FOURTEENTH.

CHAPTER I.

THERE is a beautiful and singular passage in Dante (which has not perhaps attracted the attention it deserves), wherein the stern Florentine defends Fortune from the popular accusations against her. According to him, she is an angelic power appointed by the Supreme Being to direct and order the course of human splendours ; she obeys the will of God ; she is blessed, and, hearing not those who blaspheme her, calm and aloft amongst the other angelic powers, revolves her spheral course. nd rejoices in her beatitude.*

This is a conception very different from the popular notion which Aristophanes, in his true instinct of things popular, expresses by the sullen lips of his Plutus. That deity accounts for his blindness by saying, that " when a boy, he had indiscreetly promised to visit only

* Dante here evidently associates Fortune with the planetary influences of judicial astrology. It is doubtful whether Schiller ever read Dante ; but in one of his most thoughtful poems he undertakes the same defence of Fortune, making the Fortunate a part of the Beautiful.

the good," and Jupiter was so envious of the good that he blinded the poor money-god. Whereon Chremylus asks him, whether, "if he recovered his sight, he would frequent the company of the good?" "Certainly," quoth Plutus, "for I have not seen them ever so long." "Nor I either," rejoins Chremylus pithily, "for all I can see out of both eyes."

But that misanthropical answer of Chremylus is neither here nor there, and only diverts us from the real question, and that is, "Whether Fortune be a heavenly, Christian angel, or a blind, blundering, old heathen deity?" For my part, I hold with Dante—for which, if I were so pleased, or if, at this period of my memoirs, I had half-a-dozen pages to spare, I could give many good reasons. One thing, however, is quite clear—that, whether Fortune be more like Plutus or an angel, it is no use abusing her—one may as well throw stones at a star. And I think if one looked narrowly at her operations, one might perceive that she gives every man a chance, at least once in his life; if he take and make the best of it, she will renew her visits: if not, *itur ad astra!* And therewith I am reminded of an incident quaintly narrated by Mariana in his "History of Spain," how the army of the Spanish kings got out of a sad hobble among the mountains at the Pass of Losa, by the help of a shepherd, who showed them the way. "But," saith Mariana, parenthetically, "some do say the shepherd was an angel; for, after he had shown the way, he was never seen more." That is, the angelic nature of the guide was proved by being only once

seen, and, after having got the army out of the hobble, leaving it to fight or run away, as it had most mind to. Now I look upon that shepherd, or angel, as a very good type of my fortune at least. The apparition showed me my way in the rocks to the great "Battle of Life;" after that,—hold fast and strike hard!

Behold me in London with Uncle Roland. My poor parents naturally wished to accompany me, and take the last glimpse of the adventurer on board ship; but I, knowing that the parting would seem less dreadful to them by the hearthstone, and while they could say, "He is with Roland—he is not yet gone from the land"—insisted on their staying behind; and thus the farewell was spoken. But Roland, the old soldier, had so many practical instructions to give—could so help me in the choice of the outfit, and the preparations for the voyage, that I could not refuse his companionship to the last. Guy Bolding, who had gone to take leave of his father, was to join me in town, as well as my humbler Cumberland colleagues.

As my uncle and I were both of one mind upon the question of economy, we took up our quarters at a lodging-house in the City; and there it was that I first made acquaintance with a part of London, of which few of my politer readers even pretend to be cognisant. I do not mean any sneer at the City itself, my dear alderman; that jest is worn out. I am not alluding to streets, courts, and lanes; what I mean may be seen at the West-end—not so well as at the East, but still seen very fairly! I mean—THE HOUSETOPS!

CHAPTER II.

BEING A CHAPTER ON HOUSE-TOPS.

THE HOUSE-TOPS! what a soberising effect that prospect produces on the mind! But a great many requisites go towards the selection of the right point of survey. It is not enough to secure a lodging in the attic; you must not be fobbed off with a front attic that faces the street. First, your attic must be unequivocally a back attic; secondly, the house in which it is located must be slightly elevated above its neighbours; thirdly, the window must not lie slant on the roof, as is common with attics—in which case you only catch a peep of that leaden canopy which infatuated Londoners call the sky—but must be a window perpendicular, and not half blocked up by the parapets of that fosse called the gutter; and, lastly, the sight must be so humoured that you cannot catch a glimpse of the pavements: if you once see the world beneath, the whole charm of that world above is destroyed. Taking it for granted that you have secured these requisites, open your window, lean your chin on both hands, the elbows propped commodiously on the sill, and contemplate the extra-

ordinary scene which spreads before you. You find it difficult to believe life can be so tranquil on high, while it is so noisy and turbulent below. What astonishing stillness! Eliot Warburton (seductive enchanter!) recommends you to sail down the Nile if you want to lull the vexed spirit. It is easier and cheaper to hire an attic in Holborn! You don't have the crocodiles, but you have animals no less hallowed in Egypt—the cats! And how harmoniously the tranquil creatures blend with the prospect—how noiselessly they glide along at the distance, pause, peer about, and disappear! It is only from the attic that you can appreciate the picturesque which belong to our domesticated tigerkin! The goat should be seen on the Alps, and the cat on the house-top.

By degrees the curious eye takes the scenery in detail: and first, what fantastic variety in the heights and shapes of the chimney-pots! Some all level in a row, uniform and respectable, but quite uninteresting; others, again, rising out of all proportion, and imperatively tasking the reason to conjecture why they are so aspiring. Reason answers that it is but a homely expedient to give freer vent to the smoke; wherewith Imagination steps in, and represents to you all the fretting, and fuming, and worry, and care, which the owners of that chimney, now the tallest of all, endured, before, by building it higher, they got rid of the vapours. You see the distress of the cook, when the sooty invader rushed down, "like a wolf on the fold," full spring on the Sunday joint. You hear the exclamations of the

mistress (perhaps a bride—house newly furnished) when, with white apron and cap, she ventured into the drawing-room, and was straightway saluted by a joyous dance of those monads called vulgarly *smuts*. You feel manly indignation at the brute of a bridegroom, who rushes out from the door, with the smuts dancing after him, and swears, "Smoked out again! By the Arch-smoker himself, I'll go and dine at the club!" All this might well have been, till the chimney-pot was raised a few feet nearer heaven; and now perhaps that long-suffering family owns the happiest home in the Row. Such contrivances to get rid of the smoke! It is not every one who merely heightens his chimney; others clap on the hollow tormentor all sorts of odd headgear and cowls. Here, patent contrivances act the purpose of weather-cocks, swaying to and fro with the wind; there, others stand as fixed, as if, by a "*sic jubeo*," they had settled the business. But of all those houses that, in the street, one passes by, unsuspicious of what's the matter within, there is not one in a hundred but what there has been the devil to do, to cure the chimneys of smoking! At that reflection, Philosophy dismisses the subject, and decides that, whether one lives in a hut or a palace, the first thing to do is to look to the hearth—and get rid of the vapours.

New beauties demand us. What endless undulations in the various declivities and ascents; here a slant, there a zigzag! With what majestic disdain yon roof rises up to the left! Doubtless a palace of Genii or Gin (which last is the proper Arabic word for those builders

of halls out of nothing, employed by Aladdin). Seeing only the roof of that palace boldly breaking the sky-line —how serene your contemplations! Perhaps a star twinkles over it, and you muse on soft eyes far away; while below at the threshold.—No, phantoms! we see you not from our attic. Note, yonder, that precipitous fall—how ragged and jagged the roof-scene descends in a gorge. He who would travel on foot through the pass of that defile, of which we see but the picturesque summits, stops his nose, averts his eyes, guards his pockets, and hurries along through the squalor of the grim London lazzaroni. But, seen *above*, what a noble break in the sky-line! It would be sacrilege to exchange that fine gorge for the dead flat of dull roof-tops. Look here—how delightful!—that desolate house with no roof at all—gutted and skinned by the last London fire! You can see the poor green-and-white paper still clinging to the walls, and the chasm that once was a cupboard, and the shadows gathering black on the aperture that once was a hearth! Seen below, how quickly you would cross over the way! That great crack forebodes an avalanche; you hold your breath, not to bring it down on your head. But, seen *above*, what a compassionate, inquisitive charm in the skeleton ruin! How your fancy runs riot—repeopling the chambers, hearing the last cheerful good-night of that destined Pompeii—creeping on tiptoe with the mother, when she gives her farewell look to the baby. Now all is midnight and silence; then the red, crawling serpent comes out. Lo! his breath; hark! his hiss. Now, spire after

spire he winds and he coils; now he soars up erect—crest superb, and forked tongue—the beautiful horror! Then the start from the sleep, and the doubtful awaking, and the run here and there, and the mother's rush to the cradle; the cry from the window, and the knock at the door, and the spring of those on high towards the stair that leads to safety below, and the smoke rushing up like the surge of a hell! And they run back stifled and blinded, and the floor heaves beneath them like a bark on the sea. Hark! the grating wheels thundering low; near and nearer comes the engine. Fix the ladders! — there! there! at the window, where the mother stands with the babe! Splash and hiss comes the water; pales, then flares out, the fire: foe defies foe; element, element. How sublime is the war! But the ladder, the ladder!—there, at the window! All else are saved: the clerk and his books! the lawyer with that tin box of title-deeds; the landlord, with his policy of insurance; the miser, with his bank-notes and gold: all are saved—all, but the babe and the mother. What a crowd in the streets! how the light crimsons over the gazers, hundreds on hundreds! All those faces seem as one face, with fear. Not a man mounts the ladder. Yes, there!—gallant fellow! God inspires—God shall speed thee! How plainly I see him! his eyes are closed, his teeth set. The serpent leaps up, the forked tongue darts upon him, and the reek of the breath wraps him round. The crowd has ebbed back like a sea, and the smoke rushes over them all. Ha! what dim forms are those on the ladder?

Near and nearer—crash come the roof-tiles. Alas, and alas !—no ! a cry of joy—a "Thank Heaven !" and the women force their way through the men, to come round the child and the mother. All is gone save that skeleton ruin. But the ruin is seen from *above*. O Art ! study life from the roof-tops !

CHAPTER III.

I WAS again foiled in seeing Trevanion. It was the Easter recess, and he was at the house of one of his brother ministers, somewhere in the north of England. But Lady Ellinor was in London, and I was ushered into her presence. Nothing could be more cordial than her manner, though she was evidently much depressed in spirits, and looked wan and careworn.

After the kindest inquiries relative to my parents and the Captain, she entered with much sympathy into my schemes and plans, which she said Trevanion had confided to her. The sterling kindness that belonged to my old patron (despite his affected anger at my not accepting his proffered loan), had not only saved me and my fellow-adventurer all trouble as to allotment orders, but procured advice as to choice of site and soil, from the best practical experience, which we found afterwards exceedingly useful. And as Lady Ellinor gave me the little packet of papers, with Trevanion's shrewd notes on the margin, she said with a half sigh, "Albert bids me say that he wishes he were as sanguine of his success in the cabinet as of yours in the Bush." She then turned to her husband's rise and prospects, and her face

began to change. Her eyes sparkled, the colour came to her cheeks—"But you are one of the few who know him," she said, interrupting herself suddenly; "you know how he sacrifices all things—joy, leisure, health—to his country. There is not one selfish thought in his nature. And yet such envy—such obstacles still! and" (her eyes dropped on her dress, and I perceived that she was in mourning, though the mourning was not deep), "and," she added, "it has pleased Heaven to withdraw from his side one who would have been worthy his alliance."

I felt for the proud woman, though her emotion seemed more that of pride than sorrow. And perhaps Lord Castleton's highest merit in her eyes had been that of ministering to her husband's power and her own ambition. I bowed my head in silence, and thought of Fanny. Did she, too, pine for the lost rank, or rather mourn the lost lover?

After a time, I said hesitatingly, "I scarcely presume to condole with you, Lady Ellinor! yet believe me, few things ever shocked me like the death you allude to. I trust Miss Trevanion's health has not much suffered. Shall I not see her before I leave England?"

Lady Ellinor fixed her keen bright eyes searchingly on my countenance, and perhaps the gaze satisfied her, for she held out her hand to me with a frankness almost tender, and said—"Had I had a son, the dearest wish of my heart had been to see you wedded to my daughter."

I started up—the blood rushed to my cheeks, and

then left me pale as death. I looked reproachfully at Lady Ellinor, and the word "cruel!" faltered on my lips.

"Yes," continued Lady Ellinor, mournfully, "that was my real thought, my impulse of regret, when I first saw you. But, as it is, do not think me too hard and worldly, if I quote the lofty old French proverb, *Noblesse oblige.* Listen to me, my young friend—we may never meet again, and I would not have your father's son think unkindly of me, with all my faults. From my first childhood I was ambitious—not as women usually are, of mere wealth and rank—but ambitious as noble men are, of power and fame. A woman can only indulge such ambition by investing it in another. It was not wealth, it was not rank, that attracted me to Albert Trevanion: it was the nature that dispenses with the wealth, and commands the rank. Nay," continued Lady Ellinor, in a voice that slightly trembled, "I may have seen in my youth, before I knew Trevanion, one (she paused a moment, and went on hurriedly)—one who wanted but ambition to have realised my ideal. Perhaps, even when I married—and it was said for love—I loved less with my whole heart than with my whole mind. I may say this now, for *now* every beat of this pulse is wholly and only true to him with whom I have schemed, and toiled, and aspired; with whom I have grown as one; with whom I have shared the struggle, and now partake the triumph, realising the visions of my youth."

Again the light broke from the dark eyes of this

grand daughter of the world, who was so superb a type of that moral contradiction—*an ambitious woman.*

"I cannot tell you," resumed Lady Ellinor, softening, "how pleased I was when you came to live with us. Your father has perhaps spoken to you of me, and of our first acquaintance!"

Lady Ellinor paused abruptly, and surveyed me as she paused. I was silent.

"Perhaps, too, he has blamed me?" she resumed, with a heightened colour.

"He never blamed you, Lady Ellinor!"

"He had a right to do so—though I doubt if he would have blamed me on the true ground. Yet no; he never could have done me the wrong that your uncle did, when, long years ago, Mr De Caxton in a letter—the very bitterness of which disarmed all anger—accused me of having trifled with Austin—nay, with himself! And *he*, at least, had *no* right to reproach me," continued Lady Ellinor warmly, and with a curve of her haughty lip; "for if I felt interest in his wild thirst for some romantic glory, it was but in the hope that what made the one brother so restless, might at least wake the other to the ambition that would have become his intellect and aroused his energies. But these are old tales of follies and delusions now no more: only this will I say, that I have ever felt, in thinking of your father, and even of your sterner uncle, as if my conscience reminded me of a debt which I longed to discharge—if not to them, to their children. So, when we knew you, believe me, that your interests, your

career, instantly became to me an object. But mistaking you—when I saw your ardent industry bent on serious objects, and accompanied by a mind so fresh and buoyant; and, absorbed as I was in schemes or projects far beyond a woman's ordinary province of hearth and home—I never dreamed, while you were our guest—never dreamed of danger to you or Fanny. I wound you—pardon me; but I must vindicate myself. I repeat that, if we had a son to inherit our name, to bear the burthen which the world lays upon those who are born to influence the world's destinies, there is no one to whom Trevanion and myself would sooner have intrusted the happiness of a daughter. But my daughter is the sole representative of the mother's line, of the father's name: it is not her happiness alone that I have to consult, it is her duty—duty to her birthright, to the career of the noblest of England's patriots—duty, I may say, without exaggeration, to the country for the sake of which that career is run!"

"Say no more, Lady Ellinor; say no more. I understand you. I have no hope—I never had hope—it was a madness—it is over. It is but as a friend that I ask again if I may see Miss Trevanion in your presence, before—before I go alone into this long exile, to leave, perhaps, my dust in a stranger's soil! Ay, look in my face—you cannot fear my resolution, my honour, my truth. But once, Lady Ellinor—but once more. Do I ask in vain?"

Lady Ellinor was evidently much moved. I bent down almost in the attitude of kneeling; and, brushing

away her tears with one hand, she laid the other on my head tenderly, and said in a very low voice—

"I entreat you not to ask me; I entreat you not to see my daughter. You have shown that you are not selfish —conquer yourself still. What if such an interview, however guarded you might be, were but to agitate, unnerve my child, unsettle her peace, prey upon—"

"Oh, do not speak thus—she did not share my feelings!"

"Could her mother own it if she did? Come, come, remember how young you both are. When you return, all these dreams will be forgotten; then we can meet as before—then I will be your second mother, and again your career shall be my care; for do not think that we shall leave you so long in this exile as you seem to forebode. No, no; it is but an absence—an excursion —not a search after fortune. Your fortune—leave that to us when you return!"

"And I am to see her no more!" I murmured, as I rose, and went silently towards the window to conceal my face. The great struggles in life are limited moments. In the drooping of the head upon the bosom—in the pressure of the hand upon the brow—we may scarcely consume a second in our three-score years and ten; but what revolutions of our whole being may pass within us, while that single sand drops noiseless down to the bottom of the hour-glass.

I came back with firm step to Lady Ellinor, and said calmly, "My reason tells me that you are right, and I

submit. Forgive me! and do not think me ungrateful and over-proud, if I add, that you must leave me still the object in life that consoles and encourages me through all."

"What object is that?" asked Lady Ellinor, hesitatingly.

"Independence for myself, and ease to those for whom life is still sweet. This is my twofold object; and the means to effect it must be my own heart and my own hands. And now, convey all my thanks to your noble husband, and accept my warm prayers for yourself and *her*—whom I will not name. Farewell, Lady Ellinor."

"No, do not leave me so hastily; I have many things to discuss with you—at least to ask of you. Tell me how your father bears his reverse?—tell me, at least, if there be aught he will suffer us to do for him? There are many appointments in Trevanion's range of influence that would suit even the wilful indolence of a man of letters. Come, be frank with me!"

I could not resist so much kindness; so I sat down, and, as collectedly as I could, replied to Lady Ellinor's questions, and sought to convince her that my father only felt his losses so far as they affected me, and that nothing in Trevanion's power was likely to tempt him from his retreat, or calculated to compensate for a change in his habits. Turning at last from my parents, Lady Ellinor inquired for Roland, and, on learning that he was with me in town, expressed a strong desire to see

him. I told her I would communicate her wish, and she then said thoughtfully—.

"He has a son, I think, and I have heard that there is some unhappy dissension between them."

"Who could have told you that?" I asked, in surprise, knowing how closely Roland had kept the secret of his family afflictions.

"Oh, I heard so from some one who knew Captain Roland—I forget when and where I heard it—but is it not the fact?"

"My uncle Roland has no son."

"How!"

"His son is dead."

"How such a loss must grieve him!"

I did not speak.

"But is he sure that his son is dead? What joy if he were mistaken—if the son yet lived!"

"Nay, my uncle has a brave heart, and he is resigned;—but, pardon me, have you heard anything of that son?"

"I!—what should I hear? I would fain learn, however, from your uncle himself, what he might like to tell me of his sorrows—or if, indeed, there be any chance that——"

"That—what?"

"That—that his son still survives."

"I think not," said I; "and I doubt whether you will learn much from my uncle. Still there is something in your words that belies their apparent meaning,

and makes me suspect that you know more than you will say."

"Diplomatist!" said Lady Ellinor, half smiling; but then, her face settling into a seriousness almost severe, she added—"It is terrible to think that a father should hate his son!"

"Hate!—Roland *hate* his son! What calumny is this?"

"He does not do so, then! Assure me of that; I shall be so glad to know that I have been misinformed."

"I can tell you this, and no more—for no more do I know—that if ever the soul of a father were wrapt up in a son—fear, hope, gladness, sorrow, all reflected back on a father's heart from the shadows on a son's life—Roland was that father while the son lived still."

"I cannot disbelieve you!" exclaimed Lady Ellinor, though in a tone of surprise. "Well, do let me see your uncle."

"I will do my best to induce him to visit you, and learn all that you evidently conceal from me."

Lady Ellinor evasively replied to this insinuation, and shortly afterwards I left that house in which I had known the happiness that brings the folly, and the grief that bequeaths the wisdom.

CHAPTER IV.

I HAD always felt a warm and almost filial affection for Lady Ellinor, independently of her relationship to Fanny, and of the gratitude with which her kindness inspired me: for there is an affection very peculiar in its nature, and very high in its degree, which results from the blending of two sentiments not often allied—viz. pity and admiration. It was impossible not to admire the rare gifts and great qualities of Lady Ellinor, and not to feel pity for the cares, anxieties, and sorrows which tormented one who, with all the sensitiveness of woman, went forth into the rough world of man.

My father's confession had somewhat impaired my esteem for Lady Ellinor, and had left on my mind the uneasy impression that she *had* trifled with his deep and Roland's impetuous heart. The conversation that had just passed allowed me to judge her with more justice—allowed me to see that she had really shared the affection she had inspired in the student, but that ambition had been stronger than love—an ambition, it might be, irregular, and not strictly feminine, but still of no vulgar nor sordid kind. I gathered, too, from her hints and allusions, her true excuse for Roland's mis-

conception of her apparent interest in himself: she had but seen, in the wild energies of the elder brother, some agency by which to arouse the serener faculties of the younger. She had but sought, in the strange comet that flashed before her, to fix a lever that might move the star. Nor could I withhold my reverence from the woman who, not being married precisely for love, had no sooner linked her nature to one worthy of it, than her whole life became as fondly devoted to her husband's as if he had been the object of her first romance and her earliest affections. If even her child was so secondary to her husband—if the fate of that child was but regarded by her as one to be rendered subservient to the grand destinies of Trevanion—still it was impossible to recognise the error of that conjugal devotion without admiring the wife, though one might condemn the mother. Turning from these meditations, I felt a lover's thrill of selfish joy, amidst all the mournful sorrow comprised in the thought that I should see Fanny no more. Was it true, as Lady Ellinor implied, though delicately, that Fanny still cherished a remembrance of me—which a brief interview, a last farewell, might reawaken too dangerously for her peace? Well, that was a thought that it became me not to indulge.

What could Lady Ellinor have heard of Roland and his son? Was it possible that the lost lived still? Asking myself these questions, I arrived at our lodgings, and saw the Captain himself before me, busied with the inspection of sundry specimens of the rude necessaries an Australian adventurer requires. There

stood the old soldier by the window, examining narrowly into the temper of hand-saw and tenon-saw, broad-axe and drawing-knife; and as I came up to him, he looked at me from under his black brows with gruff compassion, and said peevishly—

"Fine weapons these for the son of a gentleman!—one bit of steel in the shape of a sword were worth them all."

"Any weapon that conquers fate is noble in the hands of a brave man, uncle."

"The boy has an answer for everything," quoth the Captain, smiling, as he took out his purse and paid the shopman.

When we were alone, I said to him—"Uncle, you must go and see Lady Ellinor; she desires me to tell you so."

"Pshaw!"

"You will not?"

"No!"

"Uncle, I think that she has something to say to you with regard to—to—pardon me!—to my cousin."

"To Blanche?"

"No, no—the cousin I never saw." Roland turned pale, and sinking down on a chair, faltered out—"To him—to my son?"

"Yes; but I do not think it is news that will afflict you. Uncle, are you sure that my cousin is dead?"

"What!—how dare you!—who doubts it? Dead—dead to me for ever! Boy, would you have him live to dishonour these grey hairs?"

"Sir, sir, forgive me—uncle, forgive me: but, pray, go to see Lady Ellinor; for whatever she has to say, I repeat that I am sure it will be nothing to wound you."

"Nothing to wound me—yet relate to *him!*"

It is impossible to convey to the reader the despair that was in those words.

"Perhaps," said I, after a long pause, and in a low voice—for I was awe-stricken—"perhaps—if he be dead—he may have repented of all offence to you before he died."

"Repented—ha, ha!"

"Or, if he be not dead——"

"Hush, boy—hush!"

"While there is life, there is hope of repentance."

"Look you, nephew," said the Captain, rising, and folding his arms resolutely on his breast—"look you, I desired that that name might never be breathed. I have not cursed my son yet; could he come to life—the curse might fall! You do not know what torture your words have given me, just when I had opened my heart to another son, and found that son in you. With respect to the lost, I have now but one prayer, and you know it—the heartbroken prayer—that his name never more may come to my ears!"

As he closed these words, to which I ventured no reply, the Captain took long, disordered strides across the room: and suddenly, as if the space imprisoned, or the air stifled him, he seized his hat and hastened into the streets. Recovering my surprise and dismay,

I ran after him; but he commanded me to leave him to his own thoughts, in a voice so stern, yet so sad, that I had no choice but to obey. I knew, by my own experience, how necessary is solitude in the moments when grief is strongest and thought most troubled.

CHAPTER V.

Hours elapsed, and the Captain had not returned home. I began to feel uneasy, and went forth in search of him, though I knew not whither to direct my steps. I thought it, however, at least probable that he had not been able to resist visiting Lady Ellinor, so I went first to St James's Square. My suspicions were correct; the Captain had been there two hours before. Lady Ellinor herself had gone out shortly after the Captain left. While the porter was giving me this information, a carriage stopped at the door, and a footman, stepping up, gave the porter a note and a small parcel, seemingly of books, saying simply, "From the Marquess of Castleton." At the sound of that name I turned hastily, and recognised Sir Sedley Beaudesert seated in the carriage, and looking out of the window with a dejected, moody expression of countenance, very different from his ordinary aspect, except when the rare sight of a grey hair or a twinge of the toothache reminded him that he was no longer twenty-five. Indeed, the change was so great that I exclaimed, dubiously—"Is that Sir Sedley Beaudesert?" The footman looked at me; and, touch-

ing his hat, said, with a condescending smile,—"Yes, sir—now the Marquess of Castleton."

Then, for the first time since the young lord's death, I remembered Sir Sedley's expressions of gratitude to Lady Castleton, and the waters of Ems, for having saved him from "that horrible marquisate." Meanwhile, my old friend had perceived me, exclaiming,—

"What! Mr Caxton! I am delighted to see you. Open the door, Thomas. Pray come in, come in."

I obeyed; and the new Lord Castleton made room for me by his side.

"Are you in a hurry?" said he; "if so, shall I take you anywhere?—if not, give me half an hour of your time, while I drive to the City."

As I knew not now in what direction, more than another, to prosecute my search for the Captain, and as I thought I might as well call at our lodgings to inquire if he had not returned, I answered that I should be very happy to accompany his lordship; "though the City," said I, smiling, "sounds to me strange upon the lips of Sir Sedley—I beg pardon, I should say of Lord ——"

"Don't say any such thing; let me once more hear the grateful sound of Sedley Beaudesert. Shut the door, Thomas; to Gracechurch Street—Messrs Fudge and Fidget."

The carriage drove on.

"A sad affliction has befallen me," said the Marquess, "and none sympathise with me!"

"Yet all, even unacquainted with the late lord, must

have felt shocked at the death of one so young, and so full of promise."

"So fitted in every way to bear the burthen of the great Castleton name and property—and yet you see it killed him!—Ah! if he had been but a simple gentleman, or if he had had a less conscientious desire to do his duties, he would have lived to a good old age. I know what it is already. Oh, if you saw the piles of letters on my table! I positively dread the post. Such colossal improvement on the property which the poor boy had begun, for me to finish. What do you think takes me to Fudge and Fidget's? Sir, they are the agents for an infernal coal-mine which my cousin had reopened in Durham, to plague my life out with another thirty thousand pounds a-year! How am I to spend the money?—how am I to spend it? There's a cold-blooded head steward, who says that charity is the greatest crime a man in high station can commit; it demoralises the poor. Then, because some half-a-dozen farmers sent me a round-robin, to the effect that their rents were too high, and I wrote them word that the rents should be lowered, there was such a hullabaloo—you would have thought heaven and earth were coming together. 'If a man in the position of the Marquess of Castleton set the example of letting land below its value, how could the poorer squires in the country exist?—or if they did exist, what injustice to expose them to the charge that they were grasping landlords, vampires, and bloodsuckers! Clearly, if Lord Castleton lowered his rents (they were too low

already), he struck a mortal blow at the property of his neighbours if they followed his example; or at their characters if they did not.' No man can tell how hard it is to do good, unless fortune gives him a hundred thousand a-year, and says,—'Now, do good with it!' Sedley Beaudesert might follow his whims, and all that would be said against him was, 'Good-natured, simple fellow!' But if Lord Castleton follow his whims, you would think he was a second Catiline—unsettling the peace, and undermining the prosperity, of the entire nation!" Here the wretched man paused, and sighed heavily; then, as his thoughts wandered into a new channel of woe, he resumed,—"Ah! if you could but see the forlorn great house I am expected to inhabit, cooped up between dead walls, instead of my pretty rooms, with the windows full on the park; and the balls I am expected to give, and the parliamentary interest I am to keep up: and the villanous proposal made to me to become a lord-steward or lord-chamberlain, because it suits my rank to be a sort of a servant. Oh, Pisistratus! you lucky dog—not twenty-one, and with, I daresay, not two hundred pounds a-year in the world!"

Thus bemoaning and bewailing his sad fortunes, the poor Marquess ran on, till at last he exclaimed, in a tone of yet deeper despair,—

"And everybody says I must marry, too!—that the Castleton line must not be extinct! The Beaudeserts are a good old family eno'—as old, for what I know, as the Castletons; but the British empire would suffer

no loss if they sank into the tomb of the Capulets. But that the Castleton peerage should expire, is a thought of crime and woe, at which all the mothers of England rise in a phalanx! And so, instead of visiting the sins of the fathers on the sons, it is the father that is to be sacrificed for the benefit of the third and fourth generation!"

Despite my causes for seriousness, I could not help laughing: my companion turned on me a look of reproach.

"At least," said I, composing my countenance, "Lord Castleton has one comfort in his afflictions—if he must marry, he may choose as he pleases."

"That is precisely what Sedley Beaudesert could, and Lord Castleton cannot do," said the Marquess, gravely. "The rank of Sir Sedley Beaudesert was a quiet and comfortable rank—he might marry a curate's daughter, or a duke's—and please his eye or grieve his heart as the caprice took him. But Lord Castleton must marry, not for a wife, but for a marchioness,—marry some one who will *wear his rank* for him,—take the trouble of splendour off his hands, and allow him to retire into a corner, and dream that he is Sedley Beaudesert once more! Yes, it must be so—the crowning sacrifice must be completed at the altar. But a truce to my complaints. Trevanion informs me you are going to Australia,—can that be true?"

"Perfectly true."

"They say there is a sad want of ladies there."

"So much the better,—I shall be all the more steady."

"Well, there's something in that. Have you seen Lady Ellinor?"

"Yes—this morning."

"Poor woman!—a great blow to her—we have tried to console each other. Fanny, you know, is staying at Oxton, in Surrey, with Lady Castleton—the poor lady is so fond of her—and no one has comforted her like Fanny."

"I was not aware that Miss Trevanion was out of town."

"Only for a few days, and then she and Lady Ellinor join Trevanion in the north—you know he is with Lord N——, settling measures on which—but alas! they consult me now on those matters—force their secrets on me. I have, Heaven knows how many votes! Poor me! upon my word, if Lady Ellinor was a widow, I should certainly make up to her; very clever woman, nothing bores her." (The Marquess yawned—Sir Sedley Beaudesert never yawned.) "Trevanion has provided for his Scotch secretary, and is about to get a place in the Foreign Office for that young fellow Gower, whom, between you and me, I don't like. But he has bewitched Trevanion!"

"What sort of a person is this Mr Gower?—I remember you said that he was clever and good-looking."

"He is both, but it is not the cleverness of youth; he is as hard and sarcastic as if he had been cheated fifty times, and jilted a hundred! Neither are his good looks that letter of recommendation which a handsome face is said to be. He has an expression of counte-

nance very much like that of Lord Hertford's pet bloodhound when a stranger comes into the room. Very sleek, handsome dog, the bloodhound is certainly —well-mannered, and, I daresay, exceedingly tame; but still you have but to look at the corner of the eye, to know that it is only the habit of the drawing-room that suppresses the creature's constitutional tendency to seize you by the throat, instead of giving you a paw. Still this Mr Gower has a very striking head—something about it Moorish or Spanish, like a picture by Murillo: I half suspect that he is less a Gower than a gypsy!"

"What!" I cried, as I listened with rapt and breathless attention to this description. "He is then very dark, with high narrow forehead, features slightly aquiline, but very delicate, and teeth so dazzling that the whole face seems to sparkle when he smiles—though it is only the lip that smiles, not the eye."

"Exactly as you say; you have seen him, then?"

"Why, I am not sure, since you say his name is Gower."

"*He* says his name is Gower," returned Lord Castleton, dryly, as he inhaled the Beaudesert mixture.

"And where is he now?—with Mr Trevanion?"

"Yes, I believe so. Ah! here we are—Fudge and Fidget! But, perhaps," added Lord Castleton, with a gleam of hope in his blue eye—"perhaps they are not at home!"

Alas! that was an illusive "imagining," as the poets of the nineteenth century unaffectedly express them-

selves. Messrs Fudge and Fidget were never out to such clients as the Marquess of Castleton: with a deep sigh, and an altered expression of face, the Victim of Fortune slowly descended the steps of the carriage.

"I can't ask you to wait for me," said he: "Heaven only knows how long I shall be kept! Take the carriage where you will, and send it back to me."

"A thousand thanks, my dear lord; I would rather walk: but you will let me call on you before I leave town?"

"Let you!—I insist on it. I am still at the old quarters—under pretence," said the Marquess, with a sly twinkle of the eyelid, "that Castleton House wants painting!"

"At twelve to-morrow, then?"

"Twelve to-morrow. Alas! that's just the hour at which Mr Screw, the agent for the London property (two squares, seven streets, and a lane!) is to call."

"Perhaps two o'clock will suit you better?"

"Two! just the hour at which Mr Plausible, one of the Castleton members, insists upon telling me why his conscience will not let him vote with Trevanion!"

"Three o'clock?"

"Three!—just the hour at which I am to see the secretary of the Treasury, who has promised to relieve Mr Plausible's conscience! But come and dine with me—you will meet the executors to the will!"

"Nay, Sir Sedley—that is, my dear lord—I will take my chance, and look in after dinner."

"Do so; my guests are not lively! What a firm step the rogue has! Only twenty, I think—twenty! and not an acre of property to plague him!" So saying, the Marquess dolorously shook his head, and vanished through the noiseless mahogany doors, behind which Messrs Fudge and Fidget awaited the unhappy man,—with the accounts of the great Castleton coal-mine.

CHAPTER VI.

On my way towards our lodgings, I resolved to look in at a humble tavern, in the coffee-room of which the Captain and myself habitually dined. It was now about the usual hour in which we took that meal, and he might be there waiting for me. I had just gained the steps of this tavern, when a stage-coach came rattling along the pavement, and drew up at an inn of more pretensions than that which we favoured, situated within a few doors of the latter. As the coach stopped, my eye was caught by the Trevanion livery, which was very peculiar. Thinking I must be deceived, I drew near to the wearer of the livery, who had just descended from the roof, and while he paid the coachman, gave his orders to a waiter who emerged from the inn—"Half-and-half, cold without!" The tone of the voice struck me as familiar, and the man now looking up, I beheld the features of Mr Peacock. Yes, unquestionably it was he. The whiskers were shaved—there were traces of powder in the hair of the wig—the livery of the Trevanions (ay, the very livery—crest-button and all) upon that portly figure, which I had last seen in the more august robes of a beadle. But Mr Peacock it was—Peacock travestied, but Peacock

still. Before I had recovered my amaze, a woman got out of a cabriolet, that seemed to have been in waiting for the arrival of the coach, and, hurrying up to Mr Peacock, said in the loud impatient tone common to the fairest of the fair sex, when in haste—"How late you are!—I was just going. I must get back to Oxton to-night."

Oxton—Miss Trevanion was staying at Oxton! I was now close behind the pair—I listened with my heart in my ear.

"So you shall, my dear—so you shall; just come in, will you?"

"No, no; I have only ten minutes to catch the coach. Have you any letter for me from Mr Gower? How can I be sure, if I don't see it under his own hand, that——"

"Hush!" said Peacock, sinking his voice so low that I could only catch the words, "no names—letter, pooh, I'll tell you." He then drew her apart, and whispered to her for some moments. I watched the woman's face, which was bent towards her companion's, and it seemed to show quick intelligence. She nodded her head more than once, as if in impatient assent to what was said; and, after a shaking of hands, hurried off to the cab; then, as if a thought struck her, she ran back, and said—

"But in case my lady should not go—if there's any change of plan?"

"There'll be no change, you may be sure—positively to-morrow—not too early; you understand?"

"Yes, yes; good-by"—and the woman, who was dressed with a quiet neatness that seemed to stamp her profession as that of an abigail (black cloak with long cape—of that peculiar silk which seems spun on purpose for ladies'-maids—bonnet to match, with red and black ribbons), hastened once more away, and in another moment the cab drove off furiously.

What could all this mean? By this time the waiter brought Mr Peacock the half-and-half. He despatched it hastily, and then strode on towards a neighbouring stand of cabriolets. I followed him; and just as, after beckoning one of the vehicles from the stand, he had ensconced himself therein, I sprang up the steps and placed myself by his side. "Now, Mr Peacock," said I, "you will tell me at once how you come to wear that livery, or I shall order the cabman to drive to Lady Ellinor Trevanion's, and ask her that question myself."

"And who the devil!—Ah, you're the young gentleman that came to me behind the scenes—I remember."

"Where to, sir?" asked the cabman.

"To—to London Bridge," said Mr Peacock.

The man mounted the box, and drove on.

"Well, Mr Peacock, I wait your answer. I guess by your face that you are about to tell me a lie; I advise you to speak the truth."

"I don't know what business you have to question me," said Mr Peacock, sullenly; and, raising his glance from his own clenched fists, he suffered it to wander

over my form with so vindictive a significance that I interrupted the survey by saying, "'Will you encounter the house?' as the Swan interrogatively puts it—shall I order the cabman to drive to St James's Square?"

"Oh, you know my weak point, sir? any man who can quote Will—sweet Will—has me on the hip," rejoined Mr Peacock, smoothing his countenance, and spreading his palms on his knees. "But if a man does fall in the world, and, after keeping servants of his own, is obliged to be himself a servant,

> ——'I will not shame
> To tell you what I am.'"

"The Swan says, 'To tell you what I *was*,' Mr Peacock. But enough of this trifling; who placed you with Mr Trevanion?"

Mr Peacock looked down for a moment, and then, fixing his eyes on me, said—"Well, I'll tell you: you asked me, when we met last, about a young gentleman—Mr—Mr Vivian."

PISISTRATUS.—"Proceed."

PEACOCK.—"I know you don't want to harm him. Besides, 'He hath a prosperous art,' and one day or other—mark my words, or rather my friend Will's—

> 'He will bestride this narrow world
> Like a Colossus.'

Upon my life he will—like a Colossus,

> 'And we petty men.'"

PISISTRATUS (savagely).—"Go on with your story."

PEACOCK (snappishly).—"I am going on with it! You put me out; where was I—oh—ah—yes. I had just been sold up—not a penny in my pocket; and if you could have seen my coat—yet that was better than the small-clothes! Well, it was in Oxford Street—no, it was in the Strand, near the Lowther—

'The sun was in the heavens, and the proud day
Attended with the pleasures of the world.'"

PISISTRATUS (lowering the glass).—"To St James's Square?"

PEACOCK.—"No, no; to London Bridge.

'How use doth breed a habit in a man!'

I will go on—honour bright. So I met Mr Vivian, and as he had known me in better days, and has a good heart of his own, he says—

'Horatio,—or I do forget myself.'"

Pisistratus puts his hand on the check-string.

PEACOCK (correcting himself).—"I mean—Why, Johnson, my good fellow."

PISISTRATUS.—"Johnson!—oh, that's your name—not Peacock."

PEACOCK.—"Johnson and Peacock both" (with dignity). "When you know the world as I do, sir, you will find that it is ill travelling this 'naughty world' without a change of names in your portmanteau. 'Johnson,' says he, 'my good fellow,' and he pulled out his purse. 'Sir,' said I, 'if, "exempt from public haunt," I could get something to do when this dross is gone.' In London there are sermons in stones,

certainly, but not 'good in everything,' an observation I should take the liberty of making to the Swan, if he were not now, alas! 'the baseless fabric of a vision.'"

PISISTRATUS.—"Take care!"

PEACOCK (hurriedly).—"Then says Mr Vivian, 'If you don't mind wearing a livery, till I can provide for you more suitably, my old friend, there's a vacancy in the establishment of Mr Trevanion.' Sir, I accepted the proposal, and that's why I wear this livery."

PISISTRATUS.—"And, pray, what business had you with that young woman, whom I take to be Miss Trevanion's maid? and why should she come from Oxton to see you?"

I had expected that these questions would confound Mr Peacock; but if there really were anything in them to cause embarrassment, the *ci-devant* actor was too practised in his profession to exhibit it. He merely smiled, and, smoothing jauntily a very tumbled shirt-front, he said, "Oh, sir, fie!

'Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made.'

If you must know my love affairs, that young woman is, as the vulgar say, my sweetheart."

"Your sweetheart!" I exclaimed, greatly relieved, and acknowledging at once the probability of the statement. "Yet," I added, suspiciously—"yet, if so, why should she expect Mr Gower to write to her?"

"You're quick of hearing, sir; but though

——'All adoration, duty, and observance:
All humbleness, and patience, and impatience,'

the young woman won't marry a livery servant—proud creature!—very proud! and Mr Gower, you see, knowing how it was, felt for me, and told her, if I may take such liberty with the Swan, that she should

> ——'Never lie by Johnson's side
> With an unquiet soul;'

for that he would get me a place in the Stamps! The silly girl said she would have it in black and white—as if Mr Gower would write to her!

"And now, sir," continued Mr Peacock, with a simpler gravity, "you are at liberty, of course, to say what you please to my lady, but I hope you'll not try to take the bread out of my mouth because I wear a livery, and am fool enough to be in love with a waiting-woman—I, sir, who could have married ladies who have played the first parts in life—on the metropolitan stage."

I had nothing to say to these representations—they seemed plausible; and though at first I had suspected that the man had only resorted to the buffoonery of his quotations in order to gain time for invention, or to divert my notice from any flaw in his narrative, yet at the close, as the narrative seemed probable, so I was willing to believe the buffoonery was merely characteristic. I contented myself, therefore, with asking—

"Where do you come from now?"

"From Mr Trevanion, in the country, with letters to Lady Ellinor."

"Oh! and so the young woman knew you were coming to town?"

"Yes, sir; Mr Trevanion told me, some days ago, the day I should have to start."

"And what do you and the young woman propose doing to-morrow, if there is no change of plan?"

Here I certainly thought there was a slight, scarce perceptible, alteration in Mr Peacock's countenance, but he answered readily, "To-morrow, a little assignation, if we can both get out—

> 'Woo me, now I am in a holiday humour,
> And like enough to consent.'

Swan again, sir."

"Humph!—so then Mr Gower and Mr Vivian are the same person?"

Peacock hesitated. "That's not *my* secret, sir; 'I am combined by a sacred vow.' You are too much the gentleman to peep through the blanket of the dark, and to ask me, who wear the whips and stripes—I mean the plush small-clothes and shoulder-knots—the secrets of another gent, to 'whom my services are bound.'"

How a man past thirty foils a man scarcely twenty!—what superiority the mere fact of living-on gives to the dullest dog! I bit my lip and was silent.

"And," pursued Mr Peacock, "if you knew how the Mr Vivian you inquired after loves you! When I told him incidentally, how a young gentleman had come behind the scenes to inquire after him, he made me describe you, and then said, quite mournfully, 'If ever I am what I hope to become, how happy I shall be to

shake that kind hand once more,'—very words, sir!—honour bright!

> 'I think there's ne'er a man in Christendom
> Can lesser hide his hate or love than he.'

And if Mr Vivian has some reason to keep himself concealed still—if his fortune or ruin depend on your not divulging his secret for a while—I can't think you are the man he need fear. 'Pon my life,

> 'I wish I was as sure of a good dinner,'

as the Swan touchingly exclaims. I dare swear that was a wish often on the Swan's lips in the privacy of his domestic life!"

My heart was softened, not by the pathos of the much profaned and desecrated Swan, but by Mr Peacock's unadorned repetition of Vivian's words. I turned my face from the sharp eyes of my companion—the cab now stopped at the foot of London Bridge.

I had no more to ask, yet still there was some uneasy curiosity in my mind, which I could hardly define to myself,—was it not jealousy? Vivian so handsome and so daring—*he* at least might see the great heiress; Lady Ellinor perhaps thought of no danger there. But—I—I was a lover still, and—nay, such thoughts were folly indeed!

"My man," said I to the ex-comedian, "I neither wish to harm Mr Vivian (if I am so to call him), nor you who imitate him in the variety of your names. But I tell you fairly, that I do not like your being in

Mr Trevanion's employment, and I advise you to get out of it as soon as possible. I say nothing more as yet, for I shall take time to consider well what you have told me."

With that I hastened away, and Mr Peacock continued his solitary journey over London Bridge.

CHAPTER VII.

Amidst all that lacerated my heart, or tormented my thoughts, that eventful day, I felt at least one joyous emotion, when, on entering our little drawing-room, I found my uncle seated there.

The Captain had placed before him on the table a large Bible, borrowed from the landlady. He never travelled, to be sure, without his own Bible, but the print of that was small, and the Captain's eyes began to fail him at night. So this was a Bible with large type; and a candle was placed on either side of it; and the Captain leant his elbows on the table, and both his hands were tightly clasped upon his forehead —tightly, as if to shut out the tempter, and *force* his whole soul upon the page.

He sat the image of iron courage; in every line of that rigid form there was resolution. "I will *not* listen to my heart; I *will* read the Book, and learn to suffer as becomes a Christian man."

There was such a pathos in the stern sufferer's attitude, that it spoke those words as plainly as if his lips had said them.

Old soldier! thou hast done a soldier's part in many

a bloody field; but if I could make visible to the world thy brave soldier's soul, I would paint thee as I saw thee then!—Out on this tyro's hand!

At the movement I made, the Captain looked up, and the strife he had gone through was written upon his face.

"It has done me good," said he, simply, and he closed the book.

I drew my chair near to him, and hung my arm over his shoulder.

"No cheering news, then?" asked I, in a whisper.

Roland shook his head, and gently laid his finger on his lips.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was impossible for me to intrude upon Roland's thoughts, whatever their nature, with a detail of those circumstances which had roused in me a keen and anxious interest in things apart from his sorrow.

Yet as "restless I roll'd around my weary bed," and revolved the renewal of Vivian's connection with a man of character so equivocal as Peacock, the establishment of an able and unscrupulous tool of his own in the service of Trevanion, the care with which he had concealed from me his change of name, and his intimacy at the very house to which I had frankly offered to present him; the familiarity which his creature had contrived to effect with Miss Trevanion's maid, the words that had passed between them—plausibly accounted for, it is true, yet still suspicious—and, above all, my painful recollections of Vivian's reckless ambition and unprincipled sentiments—nay, the effect that a few random words upon Fanny's fortune, and the luck of winning an heiress, had sufficed to produce upon his heated fancy and audacious temper: when all these thoughts came upon me, strong and vivid, in the darkness of night, I longed for some confidant, more experienced in

the world than myself, to advise me as to the course I ought to pursue. Should I warn Lady Ellinor? But of what?—the character of a servant, or the designs of the fictitious Gower? Against the first I could say, if nothing very positive, still enough to make it prudent to dismiss him. But of Gower or Vivian, what could I say without—not indeed betraying his confidence, for that he had never given me—but without belying the professions of friendship that I myself had lavishly made to him? Perhaps, after all, he might have disclosed whatever were his real secrets to Trevanion; and, if not, I might indeed ruin his prospects by revealing the aliases he assumed. But wherefore reveal, and wherefore warn? Because of suspicions that I could not myself analyse—suspicions founded on circumstances most of which had already been seemingly explained away. Still, when morning came, I was irresolute what to do; and after watching Roland's countenance, and seeing on his brow so great a weight of care, that I had no option but to postpone the confidence I pined to place in his strong understanding and unerring sense of honour, I wandered out, hoping that in the fresh air I might recollect my thoughts, and solve the problem that perplexed me. I had enough to do in sundry small orders for my voyage, and commissions for Bolding, to occupy me some hours. And, this business done, I found myself moving westward: mechanically, as if it were, I had come to a kind of half-and-half resolution to call upon Lady Ellinor, and question her, carelessly and incidentally, both about

Gower and the new servant admitted to the household.

Thus I found myself in Regent Street, when a carriage, borne by post-horses, whirled rapidly over the pavement—scattering to the right and left all humbler equipages—and hurried, as if on an errand of life and death, up the broad thoroughfare leading into Portland Place. But, rapidly as the wheels dashed by, I had seen distinctly the face of Fanny Trevanion in the carriage, and that face wore a strange expression, which seemed to me to speak of anxiety and grief; and, by her side—was not that the woman I had seen with Peacock? I did not see the face of the woman, but I thought I recognised the cloak, the bonnet, and peculiar turn of the head. If I could be mistaken there, I was not mistaken at least as to the servant on the seat behind. Looking back at a butcher's boy, who had just escaped being run over, and was revenging himself by all the imprecations the Diræ of London slang could suggest, the face of Mr Peacock was exposed in full to my gaze.

My first impulse, on recovering my surprise, was to spring after the carriage; in the haste of that impulse, I cried "Stop!" But the carriage was out of sight in a moment, and my word was lost in air. Full of presentiments of some evil—I knew not what—I then altered my course, and stopped not, till I found myself, panting and out of breath, in St James's Square—at the door of Trevanion's house—in the hall. The

porter had a newspaper in his hand as he admitted me.

"Where is Lady Ellinor?—I must see her instantly."

"No worse news of master, I hope, sir?"

"Worse news of what?—of whom?—of Mr Trevanion?"

"Did you not know he was suddenly taken ill, sir; that a servant came express to say so last night? Lady Ellinor went off at ten o'clock to join him."

"At ten o'clock last night?"

"Yes, sir; the servant's account alarmed her ladyship so much."

"The new servant, who had been recommended by Mr Gower?"

"Yes, sir—Henry," answered the porter, staring at me. "Please, sir, here is an account of master's attack in the paper. I suppose Henry took it to the office before he came here, which was very wrong in him; but I am afraid he's a very foolish fellow."

"Never mind that. Miss Trevanion—I saw her just now—*she* did not go with her mother: where was she going, then?"

"Why, sir—but pray step into the parlour."

"No, no—speak!"

"Why, sir, before Lady Ellinor set out, she was afraid that there *might* be something in the papers to alarm Miss Fanny, and so she sent Henry down to Lady Castleton's, to beg her ladyship to make as light of it as she could; but it seems that Henry blabbed the worst to Mrs Mole."

"Who is Mrs Mole?"

"Miss Trevanion's maid, sir—a new maid; and Mrs Mole blabbed to my young lady, and so she took fright, and insisted on coming to town. And Lady Castleton, who is ill herself in bed, could not keep her, I suppose, —especially as Henry said, though he ought to have known better, 'that she would be in time to arrive before my lady set off.' Poor Miss Trevanion was so disappointed when she found her mamma gone. And then she would order fresh horses, and would go on, though Mrs Bates (the housekeeper, you know, sir) was very angry with Mrs Mole, who encouraged Miss; and"—

"Good heavens! Why did not Mrs Bates go with her?"

"Why, sir, you know how old Mrs Bates is, and my young lady is always so kind that she would not hear of it, as she is going to travel night and day; and Mrs Mole said she had gone all over the world with her last lady, and that"—

"I see it all. Where is Mr Gower?"

"Mr Gower, sir!"

"Yes! Can't you answer?"

"Why, with Mr Trevanion, I believe, sir."

"In the north—what is the address?"

"Lord N——, C—— Hall, near W——."

I heard no more.

The conviction of some villanous snare struck me as with the swiftness and force of lightning. Why, if Trevanion were really ill, had the false servant concealed it from me? Why suffered me to waste his

time, instead of hastening to Lady Ellinor? How, if Mr Trevanion's *sudden* illness had brought the man to London—how had he known so long beforehand (as he himself told me, and his appointment with the waiting-woman proved) the day he should arrive? Why now, if there were no design of which Miss Trevanion was the object—why so frustrate the provident foresight of her mother, and take advantage of the natural yearning of affection, the quick impulse of youth, to hurry off a girl whose very station forbade her to take such a journey without suitable protection—against what must be the wish, and what clearly were the instructions, of Lady Ellinor? Alone, worse than alone! Fanny Trevanion was then in the hands of two servants, who were the instruments and confidants of an adventurer like Vivian; and that conference between those servants—those broken references to the morrow, coupled with the name Vivian had assumed: needed the unerring instincts of love more cause for terror?—terror the darker, because the exact shape it should assume was obscure and indistinct.

I sprang from the house.

I hastened into the Haymarket, summoned a cabriolet, drove home as fast as I could (for I had no money about me for the journey I meditated); sent the servant of the lodging to engage a chaise-and-four, rushed into the room, where Roland fortunately still was, and exclaimed—"Uncle, come with me!—take money, plenty of money!—some villany, I know, though I can't explain it, has been practised on the Trevanions.

We may defeat it yet. I will tell you all by the way —come, come!"

"Certainly. But villany!—and to people of such a station—pooh!—collect yourself. Who is the villain?"

"Oh, the man I had loved as a friend—the man whom I myself helped to make known to Trevanion—Vivian—Vivian!"

"Vivian!—ah, the youth I have heard you speak of. But how?—villany to whom—to Trevanion?"

"You torture me with your questions. Listen—this Vivian (I know him)—he has introduced into the house, as a servant, an agent capable of any trick and fraud; that servant has aided him to win over her maid—Fanny's—Miss Trevanion's. Miss Trevanion is an heiress, Vivian an adventurer. My head swims round, I cannot explain now. Ha! I will write a line to Lord Castleton—tell him my fears and suspicions—he will follow us, I know, or do what is best."

I drew ink and paper towards me, and wrote hastily. My uncle came round and looked over my shoulder.

Suddenly he exclaimed, seizing my arm, "Gower, Gower! What name is this? You said 'Vivian.'"

"Vivian or Gower—the same person."

My uncle hurried out of the room. It was natural that he should leave me to make our joint and brief preparations for departure.

I finished my letter, sealed it, and when, five minutes afterwards, the chaise came to the door, I gave it to the ostler who accompanied the horses, with injunctions to deliver it forthwith to Lord Castleton himself.

My uncle now descended, and stepped from the threshold with a firm stride. "Comfort yourself," he said, as he entered the chaise, into which I had already thrown myself. "We may be mistaken yet."

"Mistaken! You do not know this young man. He has every quality that could entangle a girl like Fanny, and not, I fear, one sentiment of honour, that would stand in the way of his ambition. I judge him now as by a revelation—too late—oh Heavens, if it be too late."

A groan broke from Roland's lips. I heard in it a proof of sympathy with my emotion, and grasped his hand; it was as cold as the hand of the dead.

PART FIFTEENTH.

CHAPTER I.

THERE would have been nothing in what had chanced o justify the suspicions that tortured me, but for my impressions as to the character of Vivian.

Reader, hast thou not, in the easy, careless sociability of youth, formed acquaintance with some one, in whose more engaging or brilliant qualities thou hast—not lost that dislike to defects or vices which is natural to an age when, even while we err, we adore what is good, and glow with enthusiasm for the ennobling sentiment and the virtuous deed—no, happily, not lost dislike to what is bad, nor thy quick sense of it—but conceived a keen interest in the struggle between the bad that revolted, and the good that attracted thee, in thy companion? Then, perhaps, thou hast lost sight of him for a time—suddenly thou hearest that he has done something out of the way of ordinary good or commonplace evil; and, in either—the good or the evil—thy mind runs rapidly back over its old reminiscences, and

of either thou sayest, "How natural!—only So-and-so could have done this thing!"

Thus I felt respecting Vivian. The most remarkable qualities in his character were his keen power of calculation, and his unhesitating audacity—qualities that lead to fame or to infamy, according to the cultivation of the moral sense and the direction of the passions. Had I recognised those qualities in some agency apparently of good—and it seemed yet doubtful if Vivian were the agent—I should have cried, "It is he! and the better angel has triumphed!" With the same (alas! with a yet more impulsive) quickness, when the agency was of evil, and the agent equally dubious, I felt that the qualities revealed the man, and that the demon had prevailed.

Mile after mile, stage after stage, were passed, on the dreary, interminable, high north road. I narrated to my companion, more intelligibly than I had yet done, my causes for apprehension. The Captain at first listened eagerly, then checked me on the sudden. "There may be nothing in all this!" he cried. "Sir, we must be men here—have our heads cool, our reason clear; stop!" And, leaning back in the chaise, Roland refused further conversation, and, as the night advanced, seemed to sleep. I took pity on his fatigue, and devoured my heart in silence. At each stage we heard of the party of which we were in pursuit. At the first stage or two we were less than an hour behind; gradually, as we advanced, we lost ground, despite the most lavish liberality to the post-boys. I supposed, at length, that

the mere circumstance of changing, at each relay, the chaise as well as the horses, was the cause of our comparative slowness; and, on saying this to Roland, as we were changing horses, somewhere about midnight, he at once called up the master of the inn, and gave him his own price for permission to retain the chaise till the journey's end. This was so unlike Roland's ordinary thrift, whether dealing with my money or his own—so unjustified by the fortune of either—that I could not help muttering something in apology.

"Can you guess why I was a miser?" said Roland, calmly.

"A miser!—anything but that! Only prudent—military men often are so."

"I was a miser," repeated the Captain, with emphasis. "I began the habit first when my son was but a child. I thought him high-spirited, and with a taste for extravagance. 'Well,' said I to myself, 'I will save for him; boys will be boys.' Then, afterwards, when he was no more a child (at least he began to have the vices of a man), I said to myself, 'Patience, he may reform still; if not, I will save money, that I may have power over his self-interest, since I have none over his heart. I will bribe him into honour!' And then—and then—God saw that I was very proud, and I was punished. Tell them to drive faster—faster—why, this is a snail's pace!"

All that night, all the next day, till towards the evening, we pursued our journey, without pause, or other food than a crust of bread and a glass of wine.

But we now picked up the ground we had lost, and gained upon the carriage. The night had closed in when we arrived at the stage at which the route to Lord N——'s branched from the direct north road. And here, making our usual inquiry, my worst suspicions were confirmed. The carriage we pursued had changed horses an hour before, but had not taken the way to Lord N——'s ;—continuing the direct road into Scotland. The people of the inn had not seen the lady in the carriage, for it was already dark, but the man-servant (whose livery they described) had ordered the horses.

The last hope that, in spite of appearances, no treachery had been designed, here vanished. The Captain, at first, seemed more dismayed than myself, but he recovered more quickly. "We will continue the journey on horseback," he said; and hurried to the stables. All objections vanished at the sight of his gold. In five minutes we were in the saddle, with a postilion, also mounted, to accompany us. We did the next stage in little more than two-thirds of the time which we should have occupied in our former mode of travel—indeed, I found it hard to keep pace with Roland. We remounted; we were only twenty-five minutes behind the carriage. We felt confident that we should overtake it before it could reach the next town—the moon was up—we could see far before us—we rode at full speed. Milestone after milestone glided by; the carriage was not visible. We arrived at the post-town, or rather village; it contained but

one posting-house. We were long in knocking up the ostlers—no carriage had arrived just before us; no carriage had passed the place since noon.

What mystery was this?

"Back, back boy!" said Roland, with a soldier's quick wit, and spurring his jaded horse from the yard. "They will have taken a cross-road or bye-lane. We shall track them by the hoofs of the horses, or the print of the wheels."

Our postilion grumbled, and pointed to the panting sides of our horses. For answer, Roland opened his hand—full of gold. Away we went back through the dull sleeping village, back into the broad moonlit thoroughfare. We came to a cross-road to the right, but the track we pursued still led us straight on. We had measured back nearly half the way to the post-town at which we had last changed, when lo! there emerged from a bye-lane two postilions and their horses!

At that sight our companion, shouting loud, pushed on before us and hailed his fellows. A few words gave us the information we sought. A wheel had come off the carriage just by the turn of the road, and the young lady and her servants had taken refuge in a small inn not many yards down the lane. The man-servant had dismissed the post-boys after they had baited their horses, saying they were to come again in the morning, and bring a blacksmith to repair the wheel.

"How came the wheel off?" asked Roland, sternly.

"Why, sir, the linch-pin was all rotted away, I suppose, and came out."

"Did the servant get off the dickey after you set out, and before the accident happened?"

"Why, yes. He said the wheels were catching fire, that they had not the patent axles, and he had forgot to have them oiled."

"And he looked at the wheels, and shortly afterwards the linch-pin came out? Eh?"

"Anan, sir!" said the post-boy, staring; "why, and indeed so it was!"

"Come on, Pisistratus, we are in time; but pray God—pray God—that"—the Captain dashed his spur into the horse's sides, and the rest of his words were lost to me.

A few yards back from the causeway, a broad patch of green before it, stood the inn—a sullen, old-fashioned building of cold grey stone, looking livid in the moonlight, with black firs at one side, throwing over half of it a dismal shadow. So solitary! not a house, not a hut near it. If they who kept the inn were such that villany might reckon on their connivance, and innocence despair of their aid—there was no neighbourhood to alarm—no refuge at hand. The spot was well chosen.

The doors of the inn were closed; there was a light in the room below; but the outside shutters were drawn over the windows on the first floor. My uncle paused a moment, and said to the postilion—

"Do you know the back way to the premises?"

"No, sir: I doesn't often come by this way, and they be new folks that have taken the house—and I hear it don't prosper over much."

"Knock at the door; we will stand a little aside while you do so. If any one ask what you want—merely say you would speak to the servant—that you have found a purse;—here, hold up mine."

Roland and I had dismounted, and my uncle drew me close to the wall by the door. Observing that my impatience ill submitted to what seemed to me idle preliminaries.

"Hist!" whispered he; "if there be anything to conceal within, they will not answer the door till some one has reconnoitred; were they to see us, they would refuse to open. But seeing only the post-boy, whom they will suppose at first to be one of those who brought the carriage, they will have no suspicion. Be ready to rush in the moment the door is unbarred."

My uncle's veteran experience did not deceive him. There was a long silence before any reply was made to the post-boy's summons; the light passed to and fro rapidly across the window, as if persons were moving within. Roland made sign to the post-boy to knock again; he did so twice—thrice—and at last, from an attic window in the roof, a head obtruded, and a voice cried, "Who are you?—what do you want?"

"I'm the post-boy at the Red Lion; I want to see the servant with the brown carriage: I have found this purse!"

"Oh, that's all—wait a bit."

The head disappeared; we crept along under the projecting eaves of the house; we heard the bar lifted from the door; the door itself cautiously opened; one

spring and I stood within, and set my back to the door to admit Roland.

"Ho, help!—thieves!—help!" cried a loud voice, and I felt a hand gripe at my throat. I struck at random in the dark, and with effect, for my blow was followed by a groan and a curse.

Roland, meanwhile, had detected a ray through the chinks of a door in the hall, and, guided by it, found his way into the room at the window of which we had seen the light pass and go, while without. As he threw the door open, I bounded after him, and saw, in a kind of parlour, two females—the one a stranger, no doubt the hostess, the other the treacherous abigail. Their faces evinced their terror.

"Woman," I said, seizing the last, "where is Miss Trevanion?" Instead of replying, the woman set up a loud shriek. Another light now gleamed from the staircase which immediately faced the door; and I heard a voice, that I recognised as Peacock's, cry out, "Who's there?—What's the matter?"

I made a rush at the stairs. A burly form (that of the landlord, who had recovered from my blow) obstructed my way for a moment, to measure its length on the floor at the next. It was at the top of the stairs; Peacock recognised me, recoiled, and extinguished the light. Oaths, cries, and shrieks now resounded through the dark. Amidst them all, I suddenly heard a voice exclaim, "Here, here!—help!" It was the voice of Fanny. I made my way to the right, whence the voice came, and received a violent

blow. Fortunately, it fell on the arm which I extended, as men do who feel their way through the dark. It was not the right arm, and I seized and closed on my assailant. Roland now came up, a candle in his hand, and at that sight my antagonist, who was no other than Peacock, slipped from me, and made a rush at the stairs. But the Captain caught him with his grasp of iron. Fearing nothing for Roland in a contest with any single foe, and all my thoughts bent on the rescue of her whose voice again broke on my ear, I had already (before the light of the candle which Roland held went out in the struggle between himself and Peacock) caught sight of a door at the end of the passage, and thrown myself against it: it was locked, but it shook and groaned to my pressure.

"Hold back, whoever you are," cried a voice from the room within, far different from that wail of distress which had guided my steps. "Hold back, at the peril of your life!"

The voice, the threat, redoubled my strength; the door flew from its fastenings. I stood in the room. I saw Fanny at my feet, clasping my hands; then, raising herself, she hung on my shoulder and murmured, "Saved!" Opposite to me, his face deformed by passion, his eyes literally blazing with savage fire, his nostrils distended, his lips apart, stood the man I have called Francis Vivian.

"Fanny — Miss Trevanion — what outrage — what villany is this? You have not met this man at your free choice — oh speak!" Vivian sprang forward.

"Question no one but me. Unhand that lady—she is my betrothed—shall be my wife."

"No, no, no,—don't believe him," cried Fanny; "I have been betrayed by my own servants—brought here, I know not how! I heard my father was ill; I was on my way to him: that man met me here, and dared to—"

"Miss Trevanion—yes, I dared to say I loved you."

"Protect me from him!—you will protect me from him?"

"No, madam!" said a voice behind me, in a deep tone, "it is I who claim the right to protect you from that man; it is I who now draw around you the arm of one sacred, even to him; it is I who, from this spot, launch upon his head—a father's curse. Violator of the hearth! Baffled ravisher!—go thy way to the doom which thou hast chosen for thyself. God will be merciful to me yet, and give me a grave before thy course find its close in the hulks—or at the gallows!"

A sickness came over me—a terror froze my veins—I reeled back, and leant for support against the wall. Roland had passed his arm round Fanny, and she, frail and trembling, clung to his broad breast, looking fearfully up to his face. And never in that face, ploughed by deep emotions, and dark with unutterable sorrows, had I seen an expression so grand in its wrath, so sublime in its despair. Following the direction of his eyes, stern and fixed as the look of one who prophecies a destiny and denounces a doom, I shivered as I gazed

upon the son. His whole frame seemed collapsed and shrinking, as if already withered by the curse; a ghastly whiteness overspread the cheek, usually glowing with the dark bloom of oriental youth; the knees knocked together; and, at last, with a faint exclamation of pain, like the cry of one who receives a death-blow, he bowed his face over his clasped hands, and so remained—still, but cowering.

Instinctively I advanced, and placed myself between the father and the son, murmuring, "Spare him; see, his own heart crushes him down." Then stealing towards the son, I whispered, "Go, go; the crime was not committed, the curse can be recalled." But my words touched a wrong chord in that dark and rebellious nature. The young man withdrew his hands hastily from his face and reared his front in passionate defiance.

Waving me aside, he cried, "Away! I acknowledge no authority over my actions and my fate; I allow no mediator between this lady and myself. Sir," he continued, gazing gloomily on his father—"sir, you forget our compact. Our ties were severed, your power over me annulled; I resigned the name you bear: to you I was, and am still, as the dead. I deny your right to step between me and the object dearer to me than life."

"Oh!" (and here he stretched forth his hands towards Fanny)—"Oh, Miss Trevanion, do not refuse me one prayer, however you condemn me. Let me

see you alone but for one moment; let me but prove to you that, guilty as I may have been, it was not from the base motives you will hear imputed to me—that it was not the heiress I sought to decoy, it was the woman I sought to win; oh, hear me——"

"No, no," murmured Fanny, clinging closer to Roland, "do not leave me. If, as it seems, he is your son, I forgive him; but let him go—I shudder at his very voice!"

"Would you have me, indeed, annihilate the memory of the bond between us?" said Roland, in a hollow voice; "would you have me see in you only the vile thief, the lawless felon,—deliver you up to justice, or strike you to my feet? Let the memory still save you, and begone!"

Again I caught hold of the guilty son, and again he broke from my grasp.

"It is," he said, folding his arms deliberately on his breast—"it is for me to command in this house; all who are within it must submit to my orders. You, sir, who hold reputation, name, and honour, at so high a price, how can you fail to see that you would rob them from the lady whom you would protect from the insult of my affection? How would the world receive the tale of your rescue of Miss Trevanion? how believe that—oh, pardon me, madam—Miss Trevanion—Fanny—pardon me—I am mad; only hear me — alone — alone—and then if you, too, say 'Begone,' I submit without a murmur; I allow no arbiter but you."

But Fanny still clung closer, and closer still, to Ro-

land. At that moment I heard voices and the trampling of feet below, and supposing that the accomplices in this villany were mustering courage, perhaps, to mount to the assistance of their employer, I lost all the compassion that had hitherto softened my horror of the young man's crime, and all the awe with which that confession had been attended. I therefore, this time, seized the false Vivian with a gripe that he could no longer shake off, and said sternly—

"Beware how you aggravate your offence. If strife ensues, it will not be between father and son, and——"

Fanny sprang forward. "Do not provoke this bad dangerous man. I fear him not. Sir, I *will* hear you, and alone."

"Never!" cried I and Roland simultaneously.

Vivian turned his look fiercely to me, and with a sullen bitterness to his father, and then, as if resigning his former prayer, he said—"Well, then, be it so; even in the presence of those who judge me so severely, I will speak, at least." He paused, and throwing into his voice a passion that, had the repugnance at his guilt been less, would not have been without pathos, he continued to address Fanny: "I own that, when I first saw you, I might have thought of love, as the poor and ambitious think of the way to wealth and power. Those thoughts vanished, and nothing remained in my heart but love and madness. I was as a man in a delirium when I planned this snare. I knew but one object—saw but one heavenly vision. Oh! mine—mine at least in that vision—are you indeed lost to me for ever?"

There was that in this man's tone and manner which, whether arising from accomplished hypocrisy, or actual, if perverted, feeling, would, I thought, find its way at once to the heart of a woman who, however wronged, had once loved him; and, with a cold misgiving, I fixed my eyes on Miss Trevanion. Her look, as she turned with a visible tremor, suddenly met mine, and I believe that she discerned my doubt, for after suffering her eyes to rest on my own, with something of mournful reproach, her lips curved as with the pride of her mother, and for the first time in my life I saw anger on her brow.

"It is well, sir, that you have thus spoken to me in the presence of others, for in their presence I call upon you to say, by that honour which the son of this gentleman may for a while forget, but cannot wholly forfeit, —I call upon you to say, whether by deed, word, or sign, I, Frances Trevanion, ever gave you cause to believe that I returned the feeling you say you entertained for me, or encouraged you to dare this attempt to place me in your power."

"No!" cried Vivian, readily, but with a writhing lip —"no; but where I loved so deeply, perilled all my fortune for one fair and free occasion to tell you so alone, I would not think that such love could meet only loathing and disdain. What!—has nature shaped me so unkindly, that where I love no love can reply? What! has the accident of birth shut me out from the right to woo and mate with the highborn? For the last, at least that gentleman in justice should tell you, since it has been his care to instil the haughty lesson

into me, that my lineage is one that befits lofty hopes, and warrants fearless ambition. My hopes, my ambition—they were you! Oh, Miss Trevanion, it is true that to win you I would have braved the world's laws, defied every foe, save him who now rises before me. Yet, believe me, believe me, had I won what I dared to aspire to, you would not have been disgraced by your choice; and the name, for which I thank not my father, should not have been despised by the woman who pardoned my presumption, nor by the man who now tramples on my anguish and curses me in my desolation."

Not by a word had Roland sought to interrupt his son—nay, by a feverish excitement, which my heart understood in its secret sympathy, he had seemed eagerly to court every syllable that could extenuate the darkness of the offence, or even imply some less sordid motive for the baseness of the means. But as the son now closed with the words of unjust reproach, and the accents of fierce despair—closed a defence that showed, in its false pride and its perverted eloquence, so utter a blindness to every principle of that Honour which had been the father's idol, Roland placed his hand before the eyes that he had previously, as if spellbound, fixed on the hardened offender, and once more drawing Fanny towards him, said—

"His breath pollutes the air that innocence and honesty should breathe. He says 'All in this house are at his command,'—why do we stay?—let us go." He turned towards the door, and Fanny with him.

Meanwhile the louder sounds below had been silenced for some moments, but I heard a step in the hall. Vivian started, and placed himself before us.

"No, no, you cannot leave me thus, Miss Trevanion. I resign you—be it so; I do not even ask for pardon. But to leave this house thus, without carriage, without attendants, without explanation!—the blame falls on me—it shall do so. But at least vouchsafe me the right to repair what I yet can repair of the wrong, to protect all that is left to me—your name."

As he spoke, he did not perceive (for he was facing us, and with his back to the door) that a new actor had noiselessly entered on the scene, and, pausing by the threshold, heard his last words.

"The name of Miss Trevanion, sir—and from what?" asked the new comer, as he advanced and surveyed Vivian with a look that, but for its quiet, would have seemed disdain.

"Lord Castleton!" exclaimed Fanny, lifting up the face she had buried in her hands.

Vivian recoiled in dismay, and gnashed his teeth.

"Sir," said the marquis, "I await your reply; for not even you, in my presence, shall imply that one reproach can be attached to the name of that lady."

"Oh, moderate your tone to me, my Lord Castleton!" cried Vivian: "in you at least there is one man I am not forbidden to brave and defy. It was to save that lady from the cold ambition of her parents—it was to prevent the sacrifice of her youth and beauty, to one whose sole merits are his wealth and his titles—it was

this that impelled me to the crime I have committed, this that hurried me on to risk all for one hour, when youth at least could plead its cause to youth; and this gives me now the power to say that it does rest with me to protect the name of the lady, whom your very servility to that world which you have made your idol forbids you to claim from the heartless ambition that would sacrifice the daughter to the vanity of the parents. Ha! the future Marchioness of Castleton on her way to Scotland with a penniless adventurer! Ha! if my lips are sealed, who but I can seal the lips of those below in my secret? The secret shall be kept, but on this condition—you shall not triumph where I have failed; I may lose what I adored, but I do not resign it to another. Ha! have I foiled you, my Lord Castleton?—ha, ha!"

"No, sir; and I almost forgive you the villany you have *not* effected, for informing me, for the first time, that, had I presumed to address Miss Trevanion, her parents at least would have pardoned the presumption. Trouble not yourself as to what your accomplices may say. They have already confessed their infamy and your own. Out of my path, sir!"

Then, with the benign look of a father, and the lofty grace of a prince, Lord Castleton advanced to Fanny. Looking round with a shudder, she hastily placed her hand in his, and, by so doing, perhaps prevented some violence on the part of Vivian, whose heaving breast, and eye bloodshot, and still unquailing, showed how little even shame had subdued his fiercer passions. But he made no offer to detain them, and his tongue seemed

to cleave to his lips. Now, as Fanny moved to the door, she passed Roland, who stood motionless and with vacant looks, like an image of stone; and with a beautiful tenderness, for which (even at this distant date, recalling it) I say, "God requite thee, Fanny," she laid her other hand on Roland's arm, and said, "Come too: *your* arm still!"

But Roland's limbs trembled and refused to stir; his head, relaxing, drooped on his breast, his eyes closed. Even Lord Castleton was so struck (though unable to guess the true and terrible cause of his dejection), that he forgot his desire to hasten from the spot, and cried with all his kindliness of heart, "You are ill — you faint; give him your arm, Pisistratus."

"It is nothing," said Roland, feebly, as he leant heavily on my arm, while I turned back my head with all the bitterness of that reproach which filled my heart, speaking in the eyes that sought *him*, whose place should have been where mine now was. And, oh!—thank heaven, thank heaven!—the look was not in vain. In the same moment the son was at the father's knees.

"Oh, pardon—pardon! Wretch, lost wretch though I be, I bow my head to the curse. Let it fall—but on me, and on me, only—not on your own heart too."

Fanny burst into tears, sobbing out, "Forgive him, as I do."

Roland did not heed her.

"He thinks that the heart was not shattered before the curse could come," he said, in a voice so weak as to be scarcely audible. Then, raising his eyes to heaven,

his lips moved as if he prayed inly. Pausing, he stretched his hands over his son's head, and, averting his face, said, "I revoke the curse. Pray to thy God for pardon."

Perhaps not daring to trust himself further, he then made a violent effort, and hurried from the room.

We followed silently. When we gained the end of the passage, the door of the room we had left closed with a sullen jar.

As the sound smote on my ear, with it came so terrible a sense of the solitude upon which that door had closed—so keen and quick an apprehension of some fearful impulse, suggested by passions so fierce, to a condition so forlorn—that instinctively I stopped, and then hurried back to the chamber. The lock of the door having been previously forced, there was no barrier to oppose my entrance. I advanced, and beheld a spectacle of such agony, as can only be conceived by those who have looked on the grief which takes no fortitude from reason, no consolation from conscience—the grief which tells us what would be the earth were man abandoned to his passions, and the CHANCE of the atheist reigned alone in the merciless heavens. Pride humbled to the dust; ambition shivered into fragments; love (or the passion mistaken for it) blasted into ashes; life, at the first onset, bereaved of its holiest ties, forsaken by its truest guide! shame that writhed for revenge, and remorse that knew not prayer—all, all blended, yet distinct, were in that awful spectacle of the guilty son.

And I had told but twenty years, and my heart had

been mellowed in the tender sunshine of a happy home, and I had loved this boy as a stranger, and, lo! he was Roland's son! I forgot all else, looking upon that anguish; and I threw myself on the ground by the form that writhed there, and, folding my arms round the breast which in vain repelled me, I whispered, "Comfort—comfort—life is long. You shall redeem the past, you shall efface the stain, and your father shall bless you yet!"

CHAPTER II.

I COULD not stay long with my unhappy cousin, but still I stayed long enough to make me think it probable that Lord Castleton's carriage would have left the inn: and when, as I passed the hall, I saw it standing before the open door, I was seized with fear for Roland; his emotions might have ended in some physical attack. Nor were those fears without foundation. I found Fanny kneeling beside the old soldier in the parlour where we had seen the two women, and bathing his temples, while Lord Castleton was binding his arm; and the Marquess's favourite valet, who, amongst his other gifts, was something of a surgeon, was wiping the blade of the pen-knife that had served instead of a lancet. Lord Castleton nodded to me, "Don't be un-uneasy—a little fainting fit—we have bled him. He is safe now—see, he is recovering."

Roland's eyes, as they opened, turned to me with an anxious inquiring look. I smiled upon him as I kissed his forehead, and could, with a safe conscience, whisper words which neither father nor Christian could refuse to receive as comfort.

In a few minutes more we had left the house. As

Lord Castleton's carriage only held two, the Marquess, having assisted Miss Trevanion and Roland to enter, quietly mounted the seat behind, and made a sign to me to come by his side, for there was room for both. (His servant had taken one of the horses that had brought thither Roland and myself, and already gone on before.) No conversation took place between us then. Lord Castleton seemed profoundly affected, and I had no words at my command.

When we reached the inn at which Lord Castleton had changed horses, about six miles distant, the Marquess insisted on Fanny's taking some rest for a few hours, for indeed she was thoroughly worn out.

I attended my uncle to his room, but he only answered my assurances of his son's repentance with a pressure of the hand, and then, gliding from me, went into the farthest recess of the room, and there knelt down. When he rose, he was passive and tractable as a child. He suffered me to assist him to undress; and when he had lain down on the bed, he turned his face quietly from the light, and, after a few heavy sighs, sleep seemed mercifully to steal upon him. I listened to his heavy breathing till it grew low and regular, and then descended to the sitting-room in which I had left Lord Castleton, for he had asked me in a whisper to seek him there.

I found the Marquess seated by the fire, in a thoughtful and dejected attitude.

"I am glad you are come," said he, making room for me on the hearth, "for I assure you I have not felt

so mournful for many years; we have much to explain to each other. Will you begin: they say the sound of the bell dissipates the thunder-cloud. And there is nothing like the voice of a frank honest nature to dispel all the clouds that come upon us when we think of our own faults and the villany of others. But I beg you a thousand pardons—that young man your relation!—your brave uncle's son! Is it possible?"

My explanations to Lord Castleton were necessarily brief and imperfect. The separation between Roland and his son, my ignorance of its cause, my belief in the death of the latter, my chance acquaintance with the supposed Vivian; the interest I took in him; the relief it was to the fears for his fate with which he inspired me, to think he had returned to the home I ascribed to him: and the circumstances which had induced my suspicions, justified by the result—all this was soon hurried over.

"But, I beg your pardon," said the Marquess, interrupting me, "did you, in your friendship for one so unlike you, even by your own partial account, never suspect that you had stumbled upon your lost cousin?"

"Such an idea never could have crossed me."

And here I must observe, that though the reader, at the first introduction of Vivian, would divine the secret—the penetration of a reader is wholly different from that of the actor in events. That I had chanced on one of those curious coincidences in the romance of real life, which a reader looks out for and expects in following the course of narrative, was a supposition forbidden to

me by a variety of causes. There was not the least family resemblance between Vivian and any of his relations; and, somehow or other, in Roland's son I had pictured to myself a form and a character wholly different from Vivian's. To me it would have seemed impossible that my cousin could have been so little curious to hear any of our joint family affairs; been so unheedful, or even weary, if I spoke of Roland—never, by a word or tone, have betrayed a sympathy with his kindred. And my other conjecture was so probable!—son of the Colonel Vivian whose name he bore. And that letter, with the post-mark of "Godalming!" and my belief, too, in my cousin's death; even now I am not surprised that the idea never occurred to me.

I paused from enumerating these excuses for my dulness, angry with myself, for I noticed that Lord Castleton's fair brow darkened;—and he exclaimed, "What deceit he must have gone through before he could become such a master in the art!"

"That is true, and I cannot deny it," said I. "But his punishment now is awful: let us hope that repentance may follow the chastisement. And, though certainly it must have been his own fault that drove him from his father's home and guidance, yet, so driven, let us make some allowance for the influence of evil companionship on one so young—for the suspicions that the knowledge of evil produces, and turns into a kind of false knowledge of the world. And in this last and worst of all his actions"—

"Ah, how justify that?"

"Justify it!—good heavens! justify it!—no. I only say this, strange as it may seem, that I believe his affection for Miss Trevanion was for herself: so he says, from the depth of an anguish in which the most insincere of men would cease to feign. But no more of this—she is saved, thank Heaven!"

"And you believe," said Lord Castleton, musingly, "that he spoke the truth when he thought that I"—The Marquess stopped, coloured slightly, and then went on. "But no; Lady Ellinor and Trevanion, whatever might have been in their thoughts, would never have so forgot their dignity as to take him, a youth—almost a stranger—nay, take any one into their confidence on such a subject."

"It was but by broken gasps, incoherent, disconnected words, that Vivian—I mean my cousin—gave me any explanation of this. But Lady N——, at whose house he was staying, appears to have entertained such a notion, or at least led my cousin to think so."

"Ah! that is possible," said Lord Castleton, with a look of relief. "Lady N—— and I were boy and girl together; we correspond; she has written to me suggesting that——Ah! I see—an indiscreet woman. Hum! this comes of lady correspondents!"

Lord Castleton had recourse to the Beaudesert mixture; and then, as if eager to change the subject, began his own explanation. On receiving my letter, he saw even more cause to suspect a snare than I had done, for he had that morning received a letter from Trevanion, not mentioning a word about his illness; and on turn-

ing to the newspaper, and seeing a paragraph headed, "Sudden and alarming illness of Mr Trevanion," the Marquess had suspected some party manœuvre or unfeeling hoax, since the mail that had brought the letter must have travelled as quickly as any messenger who had given the information to the newspaper. He had, however, immediately sent down to the office of the journal to inquire on what authority the paragraph had been inserted, while he despatched another messenger to St James's Square. The reply from the office was, that the message had been brought by a servant in Mr Trevanion's livery, but was not admitted as news until it had been ascertained by inquiries at the minister's house that Lady Ellinor had received the same intelligence, and actually left town in consequence.

"I was extremely sorry for poor Lady Ellinor's uneasiness," said Lord Castleton, "and extremely puzzled, but I still thought there could be no real ground for alarm until your letter reached me. And when you there stated your conviction that Mr Gower was mixed up in this fable, and that it concealed some snare upon Fanny, I saw the thing at a glance. The road to Lord N——'s, till within the last stage or two, would be the road to Scotland. And a hardy and unscrupulous adventurer, with the assistance of Miss Trevanion's servants, might thus entrap her to Scotland itself, and there work on her fears; or, if he had hope in her affections, entrap her into consent to a Scotch marriage. You may be sure, therefore, that I was on the road as soon as possible. But as your messenger came all the

way from the City, and not so quickly perhaps as he might have come; and then, as there was the carriage to see to, and the horses to send for, I found myself more than an hour and a half behind you. Fortunately, however, I made good ground, and should probably have overtaken you half-way, but that, on passing between a ditch and a waggon, the carriage was upset, and that somewhat delayed me. On arriving at the town where the road branched off to Lord N——'s, I was rejoiced to learn you had taken what I was sure would prove the right direction, and finally I gained the clue to that villanous inn, by the report of the post-boys who had taken Miss Trevanion's carriage there, and met you on the road. On reaching the inn, I found two fellows conferring outside the door. They sprang in as we drove up, but not before my servant Summers —a quick fellow, you know, who has travelled with me from Norway to Nubia—had quitted his seat, and got into the house, into which I followed him with a step, you dog, as active as your own! Egad! I was twenty-one then! Two fellows had already knocked down poor Summers and showed plenty of fight. Do you know," said the Marquess, interrupting himself, with an air of serio-comic humiliation—" do you know that I actually —no, you never will believe it—mind 'tis a secret—actually broke my cane over one fellow's shoulders?—look!" (and the Marquess held up the fragment of the lamented weapon). " And I half suspect, but I can't say positively, that I had even the necessity to demean

myself by a blow with the naked hand—clenched too! —quite Eton again—upon my honour it was. Ha, ha!"

And the Marquess—whose magnificent proportions, in the full vigour of man's strongest, if not his most combative, age, would have made him a formidable antagonist, even to a couple of prize-fighters, supposing he had retained a little of Eton skill in such encounters —laughed with the glee of a schoolboy, whether at the thought of his prowess, or his sense of the contrast between so rude a recourse to primitive warfare, and his own indolent habits, and almost feminine good temper. Composing himself, however, with the quick recollection how little I could share his hilarity, he resumed gravely, "It took us some time—I don't say to defeat our foes; but to bind them, which I thought a necessary precaution;—one fellow, Trevanion's servant, all the while stunning me with quotations from Shakespeare. I then gently laid hold of a gown, the bearer of which had been long trying to scratch me; but being luckily a small woman, had not succeeded in reaching to my eyes. But the gown escaped, and fluttered off to the kitchen. I followed, and there I found Miss Trevanion's Jezebel of a maid. She was terribly frightened, and affected to be extremely penitent. I own to you that I don't care what a man says in the way of slander, but a woman's tongue against another woman—especially if that tongue be in the mouth of a lady's lady—I think it always worth silencing; I therefore consented to pardon this woman on condition she would find her way here before morning. No scandal shall come from her.

Thus you see some minutes elapsed before I joined you; but I minded that the less, as I heard you and the Captain were already in the room with Miss Trevanion; and not, alas! dreaming of your connection with the culprit, I was wondering what could have delayed you so long—afraid, I own it, to find that Miss Trevanion's heart might have been seduced by that—hem—hem!—handsome—young—hem—hem!—There's no fear of that?" added Lord Castleton, anxiously, as he bent his bright eyes upon mine.

I felt myself colour as I answered firmly, "It is just to Miss Trevanion to add, that the unhappy man owned, in her presence and in mine, that he had never had the slightest encouragement for his attempt—never one cause to believe that she approved the affection which, I try to think, blinded and maddened himself."

"I believe you; for I think"—Lord Castleton paused uneasily, again looked at me, rose, and walked about the room with evident agitation; then, as if he had come to some resolution, he returned to the hearth and stood facing me.

"My dear young friend," said he, with his irresistible kindly frankness, "this is an occasion that excuses all things between us, even my impertinence. Your conduct from first to last has been such, that I wish, from the bottom of my heart, that I had a daughter to offer you, and that you felt for her as I believe you feel for Miss Trevanion. These are not mere words; do not look down as if ashamed. All the marquisates in the world would never give me the pride I should feel, if

I could see in my life one steady self-sacrifice to duty and honour, equal to that which I have witnessed in you."

"Oh, my lord! my lord!"

"Hear me out. That you love Fanny Trevanion I know; that she may have innocently, timidly, half-unconsciously, returned that affection, I think probable. But—"

"I know what you would say; spare me—I know it all."

"No! it is a thing impossible; and, if Lady Ellinor could consent, there would be such a life-long regret on her part, such a weight of obligation on yours, that—no, I repeat, it is impossible! But let us both think of this poor girl. I know her better than you can—have known her from a child; know all her virtues—they are charming; all her faults—they expose her to danger. These parents of hers—with their genius and ambition—may do very well to rule England, and influence the world; but to guide the fate of that child—no!" Lord Castleton stopped, for he was affected. I felt my old jealousy return, but it was no longer bitter.

"I say nothing," continued the Marquess, "of this position, in which, without fault of hers, Miss Trevanion is placed: Lady Ellinor's knowledge of the world, and woman's wit, will see how all that can be best put right. Still it is awkward, and demands much consideration. But, putting this aside altogether, if you do firmly believe that Miss Trevanion is lost to you, can you bear to think that she is to be flung as a

mere cipher into the account of the worldly greatness of an aspiring politician—married to some minister, too busy to watch over her; or some duke, who looks to pay off his mortgages with her fortune—minister or duke only regarded as a prop to Trevanion's power against a counter cabal, or as giving his section a preponderance in the cabinet. Be assured such is her most likely destiny, or rather the beginning of a destiny yet more mournful. Now, I tell you this, that he who marries Fanny Trevanion should have little other object, for the first few years of marriage, than to correct her failings and develop her virtues. Believe one who, alas! has too dearly bought his knowledge of woman—hers is a character to be formed. Well, then, if this prize be lost to you, would it be an irreparable grief to your generous affection to think that it has fallen to the lot of one who at least knows his responsibilities, and who will redeem his own life, hitherto wasted, by the steadfast endeavour to fulfil them? Can you take this hand still, and press it, even though it be a rival's?"

"My lord! This from you to me, is an honour that—"

"You will not take my hand? Then, believe me, it is not I that will give that grief to your heart."

Touched, penetrated, melted, by this generosity in a man of such lofty claims, to one of my age and fortunes, I pressed that noble hand, half raising it to my lips—an action of respect that would have misbecome neither; but he gently withdrew the hand, in the

instinct of his natural modesty. I had then no heart to speak further on such a subject, but faltering out that I would go and see my uncle, I took up the light, and ascended the stairs. I crept noiselessly into Roland's room, and shading the light, saw that, though he slept, his face was very troubled. And then I thought, "What are my young griefs to his?" and sitting beside the bed, communed with my own heart and was still!

CHAPTER III.

At sunrise I went down into the sitting-room, having resolved to write to my father to join us; for I felt how much Roland needed his comfort and his counsel, and it was no great distance from the old Tower. I was surprised to find Lord Castleton still seated by the fire; he had evidently not gone to bed.

"That's right," said he; "we must encourage each other to recruit nature," and he pointed to the breakfast things on the table.

I had scarcely tasted food for many hours, but I was only aware of my own hunger by a sensation of faintness. I ate unconsciously, and was almost ashamed to feel how much the food restored me.

"I suppose," said I, "that you will soon set off to Lord N——'s?"

"Nay, did I not tell you, that I have sent Summers express, with a note to Lady Ellinor, begging her to come here? I did not see, on reflection, how I could decorously accompany Miss Trevanion alone, without even a female servant, to a house full of gossiping guests. And even had your uncle been well enough to go with us, his presence would but have created an

additional cause for wonder; so, as soon as we arrived, and while you went up with the Captain, I wrote my letter and despatched my man. I expect Lady Ellinor will be here before nine o'clock. Meanwhile, I have already seen that infamous waiting-woman, and taken care to prevent any danger from her garrulity. And you will be pleased to hear that I have hit upon a mode of satisfying the curiosity of our friend Mrs Grundy—that is, 'the World'—without injury to any one. We must suppose that that footman of Trevanion's was out of his mind—it is but a charitable, and your good father would say, a philosophical supposition. All great knavery is madness! The world could not get on if truth and goodness were not the natural tendencies of sane minds. Do you understand?"

"Not quite."

"Why, the footman, being out of his mind, invented this mad story of Trevanion's illness, frightened Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion out of their wits with his own chimera, and hurried them both off, one after the other. I having heard from Trevanion, and knowing he could not have been ill when the servant left him, set off, as was natural in so old a friend of the family, saved her from the freaks of a maniac, who, getting more and more flighty, was beginning to play the Jack o' Lantern, and leading her, Heaven knows where, over the country;—and then wrote to Lady Ellinor to come to her. It is but a hearty laugh at our expense, and Mrs Grundy is content. If you don't

want her to pity, or backbite, let her laugh. She is a she Cerberus—she wants to eat you; well—stop her mouth with a cake.

"Yes," continued this better sort of Aristippus, so wise under all his seeming levities; "the cue thus given, everything favours it. If that rogue of a lackey quoted Shakespeare as much in the servants' hall as he did while I was binding him neck and heels in the kitchen, that's enough for all the household to declare he was moon-stricken; and if we find it necessary to do anything more, why, we must induce him to go into Bedlam for a month or two. The disappearance of the waiting-woman is natural; either I or Lady Ellinor send her about her business for her folly in being so gulled by the lunatic. If that's unjust, why, injustice to servants is common enough—public and private. Neither minister nor lackey can be forgiven, if he help us into a scrape. One must vent one's passion on something. Witness my poor cane: though, indeed, a better illustration would be the cane that Louis XIV. broke on a footman, because his majesty was out of humour with the prince, whose shoulders were too sacred for royal indignation.

"So you see," concluded Lord Castleton, lowering his voice, "that your uncle, amongst all his other causes of sorrow, may think at least that his name is spared in his son's. And the young man himself may find reform easier, when freed from that despair of the possibility of redemption, which Mrs Grundy inflicts upon those who—Courage, then; life is long!"

"My very words!" I cried; "and so repeated by you, Lord Castleton, they seem prophetic."

"Take my advice, and don't lose sight of your cousin, while his pride is yet humbled, and his heart perhaps softened. I don't say this only for his sake. No, it is your poor uncle I think of: noble old fellow! And now, I think it right to pay Lady Ellinor the respect of repairing, as well as I can, the havoc three sleepless nights have made on the exterior of a gentleman who is on the shady side of remorseless forty."

Lord Castleton here left me, and I wrote to my father, begging him to meet us at the next stage (which was the nearest point from the high road to the Tower), and I sent off the letter by a messenger on horseback. That task done, I leant my head upon my hand, and a profound sadness settled upon me, despite all my efforts to face the future, and think only of the duties of life—not its sorrows.

CHAPTER IV.

Before nine o'clock, Lady Ellinor arrived, and went straight into Miss Trevanion's room. I took refuge in my uncle's. Roland was awake and calm, but so feeble that he made no effort to rise; and it was his calm, indeed, that alarmed me the most—it was like the calm of nature thoroughly exhausted. He obeyed me mechanically, as a patient takes from your hand the draught of which he is almost unconscious, when I pressed him to take food. He smiled on me faintly, when I spoke to him; but made me a sign that seemed to implore silence. Then he turned his face from me, and buried it in the pillow; and I thought that he slept again, when, raising himself a little, and feeling for my hand, he said in a scarcely audible voice,——

"Where is he?"

"Would you see him, sir?"

"No, no; that would kill me—and then—what would become of him?"

"He has promised me an interview, and in that interview I feel assured he will obey your wishes, whatever they are."

Roland made no answer.

"Lord Castleton has arranged all, so that his name and madness (thus let us call it) will never be known."

"Pride, pride! pride still!"—murmured the old soldier. "The name, the name—well, that is much; but the living soul!—I wish Austin were here."

"I have sent for him, sir."

Roland pressed my hand, and was again silent. Then he began to mutter, as I thought, incoherently, about the Peninsula and obeying orders; and how some officer woke Lord Wellington at night, and said that something or other (I could not catch what — the phrase was technical and military) was impossible; and how Lord Wellington asked "Where's the order-book?" and looking into the order-book, said, "Not at all impossible, for it is in the order-book;" and so Lord Wellington turned round and went to sleep again. Then suddenly Roland half rose, and said in a voice clear and firm, "But Lord Wellington, though a great captain, was a fallible man, sir, and the order-book was his own mortal handiwork. — Get me the Bible!"

Oh Roland, Roland! and I had feared that thy mind was wandering!

So I went down and borrowed a Bible, in large characters, and placed it on the bed before him, opening the shutters, and letting in God's day upon God's word.

I had just done this, when there was a slight knock at the door. I opened it, and Lord Castleton stood without. He asked me in a whisper, if he might see

my uncle. I drew him in gently, and pointed to the soldier of life, "learning what was not impossible," from the unerring Order-Book.

Lord Castleton gazed with a changing countenance, and, without disturbing my uncle, stole back. I followed him, and gently closed the door.

"You must save his son," he said, in a faltering voice—"you must; and tell me how to help you. That sight!—no sermon ever touched me more. Now come down, and receive Lady Ellinor's thanks. We are going. She wants me to tell my own tale to my old friend, Mrs Grundy: so I go with them. Come!"

On entering the sitting-room, Lady Ellinor came up and fairly embraced me. I need not repeat her thanks, still less the praises, which fell cold and hollow on my ear. My gaze rested on Fanny where she stood apart —her eyes heavy with fresh tears, bent on the ground. And the sense of all her charms—the memory of the tender, exquisite kindness she had shown to the stricken father! the generous pardon she had extended to the criminal son; the looks she had bent upon me on that memorable night—looks that had spoken such trust in my presence—the moment in which she had clung to me for protection, and her breath been warm upon my cheek—all these rushed over me; and I felt that the struggle of months was undone—that I had never loved her as I loved her then—when I saw her but to lose her evermore! And then there came for the first, and, I now rejoice to think, for the only time, a bitter, ungrateful accusation against the cruelty of fortune and

the disparities of life. What was it that set our two hearts eternally apart, and made hope impossible? Not nature, but the fortune that gives a second nature to the world. Ah, could I then think that it is in that second nature that the soul is ordained to seek its trials, and that the elements of human virtue find their harmonious place! What I answered I know not. Neither know I how long I stood there listening to sounds which seemed to have no meaning, till there came other sounds which indeed woke my sense, and made my blood run cold to hear,—the tramp of the horses, the grating of the wheels, the voice at the door that said, "All was ready."

Then Fanny lifted her eyes, and they met mine; and then involuntarily and hastily she moved a few steps towards me, and I clasped my right hand to my heart, as if to still its beating, and remained still. Lord Castleton had watched us both. I felt that watch was upon us, though I had till then shunned his looks: now, as I turned my eyes from Fanny's, that look came full upon me—soft, compassionate, benignant. Suddenly, and with an unutterable expression of nobleness, the Marquess turned to Lady Ellinor, and said—"Pardon me for telling you an old story. A friend of mine—a man of my own years—had the temerity to hope that he might one day or other win the affections of a lady young enough to be his daughter, and whom circumstances and his own heart led him to prefer from all her sex. My friend had many rivals; and you will not wonder—for you have seen the lady. Among them

was a young gentleman, who for months had been an inmate of the same house—(Hush, Lady Ellinor! you will hear me out; the interest of my story is to come) —who respected he sanctity of the house he had entered, and had left it when he felt he loved, for he was poor and the lady rich. Some time after, this gentleman saved the lady from a great danger, and was then on the eve of leaving England—(Hush! again hush!) My friend was present when these two young persons met, before the probable absence of many years, and so was the mother of the lady to whose hand he still hoped one day to aspire. He saw that his young rival wished to say, 'Farewell!' and without a witness; that farewell was all that his honour and his reason could suffer him to say. My friend saw that the lady felt the natural gratitude for a great service, and the natural pity for a generous and unfortunate affection; for so Lady Ellinor, he only interpreted the sob that reached his ear! What think you my friend did? Your high mind at once conjectures. He said to himself—'If I am ever to be blest with the heart which, in spite of disparity of years, I yet hope to win, let me show how entire is the trust that I place in its integrity and innocence: let the romance of first youth be closed —the farewell of pure hearts be spoken—unimbittered by the idle jealousies of one mean suspicion.' With that thought, which *you*, Lady Ellinor, will never stoop to blame, he placed his hand on that of the noble mother, drew her gently towards the door, and, calmly confident of the result, left these two young natures to

the unwitnessed impulse of maiden honour and manly duty."

All this was said and done with a grace and earnestness that thrilled the listeners: word and action suited to each with so inimitable a harmony that the spell was not broken till the voice ceased and the door closed.

That mournful bliss for which I had so pined was vouchsafed: I was alone with her to whom, indeed, honour and reason forbade me to say more than the last farewell.

It was some time before we recovered—before we *felt* we were alone.

O, ye moments, that I can now recall with so little sadness in the mellow and sweet remembrance, rest ever holy and undisclosed in the solemn recesses of the heart. Yes!—whatever confession of weakness was interchanged, we were not unworthy of the trust that permitted the mournful consolation of the parting. No trite love-tale—with vows not to be fulfilled, and hopes that the future must belie—mocked the realities of the life that lay before us. Yet on the confines of the dream we saw the day rising cold upon the world: and if—children as we well-nigh were—we shrunk somewhat from the light, we did not blaspheme the sun, and cry, "There is darkness in the dawn!"

All that we attempted was to comfort and strengthen each other for that which must be: not seeking to conceal the grief we felt, but promising, with simple faith, to struggle against the grief. If vow were pledged between us—*that* was the vow—each for the other's

sake would strive to enjoy the blessings Heaven left us still. Well may I say that we were children! I know not, in the broken words that passed between us, in the sorrowful hearts which those words revealed—I know not if there were that which they who own, in human passion, but the storm and the whirlwind, would call the love of maturer years—the love that gives fire to the song, and tragedy to the stage; but I know that there was neither a word nor a thought which made the sorrow of the children a rebellion to the heavenly Father.

And again the door unclosed, and Fanny walked with a firm step to her mother's side, and, pausing there, extended her hand to me, and said, as I bent over it, "Heaven WILL be with you!"

A word from Lady Ellinor; a frank smile from him—the rival; one last, last glance from the soft eyes of Fanny, and then Solitude rushed upon me—rushed, as something visible, palpable, overpowering. I felt it in the glare of the sunbeam—I heard it in the breath of the air! like a ghost it rose there—where *she* had filled the space with her presence but a moment before. A something seemed gone from the universe for ever; a change like that of death passed through my being; and when I woke to feel that my being lived again, I knew that it was my youth and its poet-land that were no more, and that I had passed, with an unconscious step, which never could retrace its way, into the hard world of laborious man!

PART SIXTEENTH.

CHAPTER I.

"PLEASE, sir, be this note for you?" asked the waiter.

"For me—yes; it is my name."

I did not recognise the handwriting, and yet the note was from one whose writing I had often seen. But formerly the writing was cramped, stiff, perpendicular (a feigned hand, though I guessed not it was feigned); now, it was hasty, irregular, impatient—scarce a letter formed, scarce a word that seemed finished—and yet strangely legible withal, as the handwriting of a bold man almost always is. I opened the note listlessly, and read—

"I have watched for you all the morning. I saw her go. Well!—I did not throw myself under the hoofs of the horses. I write this in a public-house, not far. Will you follow the bearer, and see once again the outcast whom all the rest of the world will shun?"

Though I did not recognise the hand, there could be no doubt who was the writer.

"The boy wants to know if there's an answer," said the waiter.

I nodded, took up my hat, and left the room. A ragged boy was standing in the yard, and scarcely six words passed between us, before I was following him through a narrow lane that faced the inn, and terminated in a turnstile. Here the boy paused, and making me a sign to go on, went back his way whistling. I passed the turnstile, and found myself in a green field, with a row of stunted willows hanging over a narrow rill. I looked round and saw Vivian (as I intended still to call him) half kneeling, and seemingly intent upon some object in the grass.

My eye followed his mechanically. A young unfledged bird that had left the nest too soon, stood, all still and alone, on the bare short sward—its beak open as for food, its gaze fixed on us with a wistful stare. Methought there was something in the forlorn bird that softened me more to the forlorner youth, of whom it seemed a type.

"Now," said Vivian, speaking half to himself, half to me, "did the bird fall from the nest, or leave the nest at its own wild whim? The parent does not protect it. Mind, I say not it is the parents' fault—perhaps the fault is all with the wanderer. But, look you, though the parent is not here, the foe is!—yonder see!"

And the young man pointed to a large brindled cat, that, kept back from its prey by our unwelcome neigh-

bourhood, still remained watchful, a few paces off, stirring its tail gently backwards and forwards, and with that stealthy look in its round eyes, dulled by the sun —half fierce, half frightened—which belongs to its tribe, when man comes between the devourer and the victim.

"I do see," said I; "but a passing footstep has saved the bird!"

"Stop!" said Vivian, laying my hand on his own —and with his old bitter smile on his lip—"stop! do you think it mercy to save the bird? What from and what for? From a natural enemy—from a short pang and a quick death? Fie!—is not that better than slow starvation? or, if you take more heed of it, than the prison-bars of a cage? You cannot restore the nest, you cannot recall the parent! Be wiser in your mercy: leave the bird to its gentlest fate!"

I looked hard on Vivian; the lip had lost the bitter smile. He rose and turned away. I sought to take up the poor bird, but it did not know its friends, and ran from me, chirping piteously—ran towards the very jaws of the grim enemy. I was only just in time to scare away the beast, which sprang up a tree, and glared down through the hanging boughs. Then I followed the bird, and, as I followed, I heard, not knowing at first whence the sound came, a short, quick, tremulous note. Was it near? was it far?—from the earth?—in the sky?—Poor parent-bird! like parent-love, it seemed now far and now near; now on earth, now in sky!

And at last, quick and sudden, as if born of the space, lo! the little wings hovered over me!

The young bird halted, and I also.

"Come," said I, "ye have found each other at last; settle it between you!"

I went back to the outcast.

CHAPTER II.

PISISTRATUS.—"How came you to know we had stayed in the town?"

VIVIAN.—"Do you think I could remain where you left me? I wandered out—wandered hither. Passing at dawn through yon streets, I saw the ostlers loitering about the gates of the yard, overheard them talk, and so knew you were all at the inn—all!" (He sighed heavily.)

PISISTRATUS.—"Your poor father is very ill! O cousin, how could you fling from you so much love?"

VIVIAN.—"Love!—his!—my father's!"

PISISTRATUS.—"Do you really not believe, then, that your father loved you?"

VIVIAN.—"If I had believed it, I had never left him! All the gold of the Indies had never bribed me to leave my mother!"

PISISTRATUS.—"This is indeed a strange misconception of yours. If we can remove it, all may be well yet. Need there now be any secrets between us?" (Persuasively).—"Sit down, and tell me all, cousin."

After some hesitation, Vivian complied; and by the clearing of his brow, and the very tone of his voice, I

felt sure that he was no longer seeking to disguise the truth. But, as I afterwards learned the father's tale as well as now the son's, so, instead of repeating Vivian's words, which—not by design, but by the twist of a mind habitually wrong—distorted the facts, I will state what appears to me the real case, as between the parties so unhappily opposed. Reader, pardon me if the recital be tedious. And if thou thinkest that I bear not hard enough on the erring hero of the story, remember, that he who recites judges as Austin's son must judge of Roland's.

CHAPTER III.

VIVIAN.

AT THE ENTRANCE OF LIFE SITS—THE MOTHER.

It was during the war in Spain that a severe wound, and the fever which ensued, detained Roland at the house of a Spanish widow. His hostess had once been rich; but her fortune had been ruined in the general calamities of the country. She had an only daughter, who assisted to nurse and tend the wounded Englishman; and when the time approached for Roland's departure, the frank grief of the young Ramouna betrayed the impression that the guest had made upon her affections. Much of gratitude, and something, it might be, of an exquisite sense of honour, aided, in Roland's breast, the charm naturally produced by the beauty of his young nurse, and the knightly compassion he felt for her ruined fortunes and desolate condition.

In one of those hasty impulses common to a generous nature—and which too often fatally vindicate the rank of Prudence amidst the tutelary Powers of Life—Roland committed the error of marriage with a girl of

whose connections he knew nothing, and of whose nature little more than its warm spontaneous susceptibility. In a few days subsequent to these rash nuptials, Roland rejoined the march of the army; nor was he able to return to Spain till after the crowning victory of Waterloo.

Maimed by the loss of a limb, and with the scars of many a noble wound still fresh, Roland then hastened to a home, the dreams of which had soothed the bed of pain, and now replaced the earlier visions of renown. During his absence a son had been born to him—a son whom he might rear to take the place he had left in his country's service; to renew, in some future fields, a career that had failed the romance of his own antique and chivalrous ambition. As soon as that news had reached him, his care had been to provide an English nurse for the infant—so that, with the first sounds of the mother's endearments, the child might yet hear a voice from the father's land. A female relation of Bolt's had settled in Spain, and was induced to undertake this duty. Natural as this appointment was to a man so devotedly English, it displeased his wild and passionate Ramouna. She had that mother's jealousy, strongest in minds uneducated; she had also that peculiar pride which belongs to her country-people, of every rank and condition; the jealousy and the pride were both wounded by the sight of the English nurse at the child's cradle.

That Roland, on regaining his Spanish hearth, should be disappointed in his expectations of the happiness

awaiting him there, was the inevitable condition of such a marriage; since, not the less for his military bluntness, Roland had that refinement of feeling, perhaps over-fastidious, which belongs to all natures essentially poetic: and as the first illusions of love died away, there could have been little indeed congenial to his stately temper in one divided from him by an utter absence of education, and by the strong, but nameless distinctions of national views and manners. The disappointment, probably, however, went deeper than that which usually attends an ill-assorted union; for, instead of bringing his wife to his old Tower (an expatriation which she would doubtless have resisted to the utmost), he accepted, maimed as he was, not very long after his return to Spain, the offer of a military post under Ferdinand. The Cavalier doctrines and intense loyalty of Roland attached him, without reflection, to the service of a throne which the English arms had contributed to establish; while the extreme unpopularity of the Constitutional Party in Spain, and the stigma of irreligion fixed to it by the priests, aided to foster Roland's belief that he was supporting a beloved king against the professors of those revolutionary and Jacobinical doctrines, which to him were the very atheism of politics. The experience of a few years in the service of a bigot so contemptible as Ferdinand, whose highest object of patriotism was the restoration of the Inquisition, added another disappointment to those which had already embittered the life of a man who had seen in the grand hero of Cervantes no follies to

satirise, but high virtues to imitate. Poor Quixote himself—he came mournfully back to his La Mancha, with no other reward for his knight-errantry than a decoration which he disdained to place beside his simple Waterloo medal, and a grade for which he would have blushed to resign his more modest, but more honourable English dignity.

But, still weaving hopes, the sanguine man returned to his Penates. His child had now grown from infancy into boyhood—the child would pass naturally into his care. Delightful occupation!—At the thought home smiled again.

Now behold the most pernicious circumstance in this ill-omened connection.

The father of Ramouna had been one of that strange and mysterious race which presents in Spain so many features distinct from the characteristics of its kindred tribes in more civilised lands. The Gitano, or gipsy of Spain, is not the mere vagrant we see on our commons and road-sides. Retaining, indeed, much of his lawless principles and predatory inclinations, he lives often in towns, exercises various callings, and not unfrequently becomes rich. A wealthy Gitano had married a Spanish woman:* Roland's wife had been the offspring of this marriage. The Gitano had died while Ramouna was yet extremely young, and her childhood had been free from the influences of her paternal kindred. But, though

* A Spaniard very rarely indeed marries a Gitano, or female gipsy. But occasionally (observes Mr Borrow) a wealthy Gitano marries a Spanish female.

her mother, retaining her own religion, had brought up Ramouna in the same faith, pure from the godless creed of the Gitano—and, at her husband's death, had separated herself wholly from his tribe—still she had lost caste with her own kin and people. And while struggling to regain it, the fortune, which made her sole chance of success in that attempt, was swept away, so that she had remained apart and solitary, and could bring no friends to cheer the solitude of Ramouna during Roland's absence. But, while my uncle was still in the service of Ferdinand, the widow died; and then the only relatives who came round Ramouna were her father's kindred. They had not ventured to claim affinity while her mother lived; and they did so now by attentions and caresses to her son. This opened to them at once Ramouna's heart and doors. Meanwhile the English nurse—who, in spite of all that could render her abode odious to her, had, from strong love to her charge, stoutly maintained her post—died, a few weeks after Ramouna's mother, and no healthful influence remained to counteract those baneful ones to which the heir of the honest old Caxtons was subject. But Roland returned home in a humour to be pleased with all things. Joyously he clasped his wife to his breast, and thought, with self-reproach, that he had forborne too little, and exacted too much—he would be wiser now. Delightedly he acknowledged the beauty, the intelligence, and manly bearing of the boy, who played with his sword-knot, and ran off with his pistols as a prize.

The news of the Englishman's arrival at first kept the lawless kinsfolk from the house; but they were fond of the boy, and the boy of them, and interviews between him and these wild comrades, if stolen, were not less frequent. Gradually Roland's eyes became opened. As, in habitual intercourse, the boy abandoned the reserve which awe and cunning at first imposed, Roland was inexpressibly shocked at the bold principles his son affected, and at his utter incapacity even to comprehend that plain honesty and that frank honour which, to the English soldier, seemed ideas innate and heaven-planted. Soon afterwards, Roland found that a system of plunder was carried on in his household, and tracked it to the connivance of the wife and the agency of his son, for the benefit of lazy bravoes and dissolute vagrants. A more patient man than Roland might well have been exasperated—a more wary man confounded by this discovery. He took the natural step—perhaps insisting on it too summarily—perhaps not allowing enough for the uncultured mind and lively passions of his wife—he ordered her instantly to prepare to accompany him from the place, and to abandon all communication with her kindred.

A vehement refusal ensued; but Roland was not a man to give up such a point, and at length a false submission, and a feigned repentance, soothed his resentment and obtained his pardon. They moved several miles from the place; but where they moved, there, some at least, and those the worst, of the baleful brood, stealthily followed. Whatever Ramouna's ear-

lier love for Roland had been, it had evidently long ceased, in the thorough want of sympathy between them, and in that absence which, if it renews a strong affection, destroys an affection already weakened. But the mother and son adored each other with all the strength of their strong, wild natures. Even under ordinary circumstances, the father's influence over a boy yet in childhood is exerted in vain, if the mother lend herself to baffle it. And in this miserable position, what chance had the blunt, stern, honest Roland (separated from his son during the most ductile years of infancy) against the ascendancy of a mother who humoured all the faults, and gratified all the wishes, of her darling?

In his despair, Roland let fall the threat that, if thus thwarted, it would become his duty to withdraw his son from the mother. This threat instantly hardened both hearts against him. The wife represented Roland to the boy as a tyrant, as an enemy—as one who had destroyed all the happiness they had before enjoyed in each other—as one whose severity showed that he hated his own child; and the boy believed her. In his own house a firm union was formed against Roland, and protected by the cunning which is the force of the weak against the strong.

In spite of all, Roland could never forget the tenderness with which the young nurse had watched over the wounded man, nor the love—genuine for the hour, though not drawn from the feelings which withstand the wear and tear of life—that lips so beautiful had pledged him in the by-gone days. These thoughts

must have come perpetually between his feelings and his judgment, to embitter still more his position—to harass still more his heart. And if, by the strength of that sense of duty which made the force of his character, he could have strung himself to the fulfilment of the threat, humanity, at all events, compelled him to delay it—his wife promised to be again a mother. Blanche was born. How could he take the infant from the mother's breast, or abandon the daughter to the fatal influences from which only, by so violent an effort, he could free the son?

No wonder, poor Roland, that those deep furrows contracted thy bold front, and thy hair grew grey before its time.

Fortunately, perhaps, for all parties, Roland's wife died while Blanche was still an infant. She was taken ill of a fever—she died delirious, clasping her boy to her breast, and praying the saints to protect him from his cruel father. How often that deathbed haunted the son, and justified his belief that there was no parent's love in the heart which was now his sole shelter from the world, and the "pelting of its pitiless rain." Again I say, poor Roland! for I know that, in that harsh, unloving disrupture of such solemn ties, thy large, generous heart forgot its wrongs; again didst thou see tender eyes bending over the wounded stranger—again hear low murmurs breathe the warm weakness which the women of the south deem it no shame to own. And now did it all end in those ravings of hate, and in that glazing gaze of terror!

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRECEPTOR.

Roland removed to France, and fixed his abode in the environs of Paris. He placed Blanche at a convent in the immediate neighbourhood, going to see her daily, and gave himself up to the education of his son. The boy was apt to learn, but to unlearn was here the arduous task—and for that task it would have needed either the passionless experience, the exquisite forbearance of a practised teacher, or the love and confidence, and yielding heart of a believing pupil. Roland felt that he was not the man to be the teacher, and that his son's heart remained obstinately closed to him. He looked round, and found at the other side of Paris what seemed a suitable preceptor—a young Frenchman of some distinction in letters, more especially in science, with all a Frenchman's eloquence of talk, full of high-sounding sentiments that pleased the romantic enthusiasm of the Captain; so Roland, with sanguine hopes, confided his son to this man's care. The boy's natural quickness mastered readily all that pleased his taste;

he learned to speak and write French with rare felicity and precision. His tenacious memory, and those flexile organs in which the talent for languages is placed, served, with the help of an English master, to revive his earlier knowledge of his father's tongue, and to enable him to speak it with fluent correctness—though there was always in his accent something which had struck me as strange; but not suspecting it to be foreign, I had thought it a theatrical affectation. He did not go far into science—little farther, perhaps, than a smattering of French mathematics; but he acquired a remarkable facility and promptitude in calculation. He devoured eagerly the light reading thrown in his way, and picked up thence that kind of knowledge which novels and plays afford, for good or evil, according as the novel or the play elevates the understanding and ennobles the passions, or merely corrupts the fancy, and lowers the standard of human nature. But of all that Roland desired him to be taught, the son remained as ignorant as before. Among the other misfortunes of this ominous marriage, Roland's wife had possessed all the superstitions of a Roman Catholic Spaniard, and with these the boy had unconsciously intermingled doctrines far more dreary, imbibed from the dark paganism of the Gitanos.

Roland had sought a Protestant for his son's tutor. The preceptor was nominally a Protestant—a biting derider of all superstitions, indeed! He was such a Protestant as some defender of Voltaire's religion says the Great Wit would have been had he lived in a Pro-

testant country. The Frenchman laughed the boy out of his superstitions, to leave behind them the sneering scepticisms of the *Encyclopédie*, without those redeeming ethics on which all sects of philosophy are agreed, but which, unhappily, it requires a philosopher to comprehend.

This preceptor was, doubtless, not aware of the mischief he was doing; and for the rest he taught his pupil after his own system—a mild and plausible one, very much like the system we at home are recommended to adopt—"Teach the understanding,—all else will follow;" "Learn to read *something*, and it will all come right;" "Follow the bias of the pupil's mind; thus you develop genius, not thwart it." Mind, understanding, genius—fine things! But, to educate the whole man, you must educate something more than these. Not for want of mind, understanding, genius, have Borgias and Neros left their names as monuments of horror to mankind. Where, in all this teaching, was one lesson to warm the heart and guide the soul?

Oh, mother mine! that the boy had stood by thy knee, and heard from thy lips why life was given us, in what life shall end, and how heaven stands open to us night and day! Oh, father mine! that thou hadst been his preceptor, not in book-learning, but the heart's simple wisdom! Oh that he had learned from thee, in parables closed with practice, the happiness of self-sacrifice, and how "good deeds should repair the bad!"

It was the misfortune of this boy, with his daring

and his beauty, that there was in his exterior and his manner that which attracted indulgent interest, and a sort of compassionate admiration. The Frenchman liked him—believed his story—thought him ill-treated by that hard-visaged English soldier. All English people were so disagreeable, particularly English soldiers; and the Captain once mortally offended the Frenchman by calling Vilainton *un grand homme*, and denying, with brutal indignation, that the English had poisoned Napoleon! So, instead of teaching the son to love and revere his father, the Frenchman shrugged his shoulders when the boy broke into some unfilial complaint, and at most said, "*Mais, cher enfant, ton père est Anglais,—c'est tout dire.*" Meanwhile, as the child sprang rapidly into precocious youth, he was permitted a liberty in his hours of leisure of which he availed himself with all the zest of his earlier habits and adventurous temper. He formed acquaintances among the loose young haunters of *cafés* and spendthrifts of that capital—the wits! He became an excellent swordsman and pistol-shot—adroit in all games in which skill helps fortune. He learned betimes to furnish himself with money, by the cards and the billiard-balls.

But, delighted with the easy home he had obtained, he took care to school his features and smooth his manner in his father's visits—to make the most of what he had learned of less ignoble knowledge, and, with his characteristic imitativeness, to cite the finest sentiments he had found in his plays and novels.

What father is not credulous? Roland believed, and wept tears of joy. And now he thought the time was come to take back the boy—to return with a worthy heir to the old Tower. He thanked and blessed the tutor—he took the son. But, under pretence that he had yet some things to master, whether in book-knowledge or manly accomplishments, the youth begged his father, at all events, not yet to return to England—to let him attend his tutor daily for some months. Roland consented, moved from his old quarters, and took a lodging for both in the same suburb as that in which the teacher resided. But soon, when they were under one roof, the boy's habitual tastes, and his repugnance to all paternal authority, were betrayed. To do my unhappy cousin justice (such as that justice is), though he had the cunning for a short disguise, he had not the hypocrisy to maintain systematic deceit. He could play a part for a while, from an exulting joy in his own address; but he could not wear a mask with the patience of cold-blooded dissimulation. Why enter into painful details, so easily divined by the intelligent reader? The faults of the son were precisely those to which Roland would be least indulgent. To the ordinary scrapes of high-spirited boyhood, no father, I am sure, would have been more lenient; but to anything that seemed low, petty—that grated on him as a gentleman and soldier—there, not for worlds would I have braved the darkness of his frown, and the woe that spoke like scorn in his voice. And when, after all warning and prohibition were in vain, Roland found

his son, in the middle of the night, in a resort of gamblers and sharpers, carrying all before him with his cue, in the full flush of triumph, and a great heap of five-franc pieces before him, you may conceive with what wrath the proud, hasty, passionate man drove out, cane in hand, the obscene associates, flinging after them the son's ill-gotten gains; and with what resentful humiliation the son was compelled to follow the father home. Then Roland took the boy to England, but not to the old Tower; that hearth of his ancestors was still too sacred for the footsteps of the vagrant heir!

CHAPTER V.

THE HEARTH WITHOUT TRUST, AND THE WORLD WITHOUT A GUIDE.

And then, vainly grasping at every argument his blunt sense could suggest—then talked Roland much and grandly of the duties men owed—even if they threw off all love to their father—still to their father's name; and then his pride, always so lively, grew irritable and harsh, and seemed, no doubt, to the perverted ears of the son, unlovely and unloving. And that pride, without serving one purpose of good, did yet more mischief; for the youth caught the disease, but in a wrong way. And he said to himself—

"Ho, then, my father is a great man, with all these ancestors and big words! And he has lands and a castle—and yet how miserably we live, and how he stints me! But, if he has cause for pride in all these dead men, why, so have I. And are these lodgings, these appurtenances, fit for the 'gentleman' he says I am?"

Even in England, the gipsy blood broke out as before, and the youth found vagrant associates, Heaven knows how or where; and strange-looking forms

gaudily shabby and disreputably smart, were seen lurking in the corner of the street, or peering in at the window, slinking off if they saw Roland—and Roland could not stoop to be a spy. And the son's heart grew harder and harder against his father, and his father's face now never smiled on him. Then bills came in, and duns knocked at the door. Bills and duns to a man who shrunk from the thought of a debt as an ermine from a spot on its fur! And the son's short answer to remonstrance was,—"Am I not a gentleman?—these are the things gentlemen require." Then perhaps Roland remembered the experiment of his French friend, and left his bureau unlocked, and said, "Ruin me if you will, but no debts. There is money in those drawers—they are unlocked." That trust would for ever have cured of extravagance a youth with a high and delicate sense of honour: the pupil of the Gitános did not understand the trust; he thought it conveyed a natural, though ungracious permission to take out what he wanted—and he took! To Roland this seemed a theft, and a theft of the coarsest kind: but when he so said, the son started indignant, and saw in that which had been so touching an appeal to his honour, but a trap to decoy him into disgrace. In short, neither could understand the other. Roland forbade his son to stir from the house; and the young man the same night let himself out, and stole forth into the wide world, to enjoy or defy it in his own wild way.

It would be tedious to follow him through his various

adventures and experiments on fortune (even if I knew them all, which I do not). And now putting altogether aside his right name, which he had voluntarily abandoned, and not embarrassing the reader with the earlier aliases assumed, I shall give to my unfortunate kinsman the name by which I first knew him, and continue to do so until—Heaven grant the time may come!—having first redeemed, he may reclaim, his own. It was in joining a set of strolling players that Vivian became acquainted with Peacock; and that worthy, who had many strings to his bow, soon grew aware of Vivian's extraordinary skill with the cue, and saw therein a better mode of making their joint fortunes than the boards of an itinerant Thespis furnished to either. Vivian listened to him, and it was while their intimacy was most fresh that I met them on the high-road. That chance meeting produced (if I may be allowed to believe his assurance) a strong, and, for the moment, a salutary effect upon Vivian. The comparative innocence and freshness of a boy's mind were new to him; the elastic healthful spirits with which those gifts were accompanied startled him, by the contrast to his own forced gaiety and secret gloom. And this boy was his own cousin!

Coming afterwards to London, he adventured inquiry at the hotel in the Strand at which I had given my address; learned where we were; and passing one night into the street, saw my uncle at the window—to recognise and to fly from him. Having then some money at his disposal, he broke off abruptly from the set in which

he had been thrown. He had resolved to return to France—he would try for a more respectable mode of existence. He had not found happiness in that liberty he had won, nor room for the ambition that began to gnaw him, in those pursuits from which his father had vainly warned him. His most reputable friend was his old tutor; he would go to him. He went; but the tutor was now married, and was himself a father, and that made a wonderful alteration in his practical ethics. It was no longer moral to aid the son in rebellion to his father. Vivian evinced his usual sarcastic haughtiness at the reception he met, and was requested civilly to leave the house. Then again he flung himself on his wits at Paris. But there were plenty of wits there sharper than his own. He got into some quarrel with the police—not, indeed, for any dishonest practices of his own, but from an unwary acquaintance with others less scrupulous, and deemed it prudent to quit France. Thus had I met him again, forlorn and ragged, in the streets of London.

Meanwhile Roland, after the first vain search, had yielded to the indignation and disgust that had long rankled within him. His son had thrown off his authority, because it preserved him from dishonour. His ideas of discipline were stern, and patience had been well-nigh crushed out of his heart. He thought he could bear to resign his son to his fate—to disown him, and to say, "I have no more a son." It was in this mood that he had first visited our house. But when, on that memorable night in which he had nar-

rated to his thrilling listeners the dark tale of a fellow-sufferer's woe and crime—betraying in the tale, to my father's quick sympathy, his own sorrow and passion—it did not need much of his gentler brother's subtle art to learn or guess the whole, nor much of Austin's mild persuasion to convince Roland that he had not yet exhausted all efforts to track the wanderer and reclaim the erring child. Then he had gone to London—then he had sought every spot which the outcast would probably haunt—then had he saved and pinched from his own necessities to have wherewithal to enter theatres and gaming-houses, and fee the agencies of police; then had he seen the form for which he had watched and pined, in the street below his window, and cried, in a joyous delusion, "He repents!" One day a letter reached my uncle, through his banker's, from the French tutor (who knew of no other means of tracing Roland but through the house by which his salary had been paid), informing him of his son's visit. Roland started instantly for Paris. Arriving there, he could only learn of his son through the police, and from them only learn that he had been seen in the company of accomplished swindlers, who were already in the hands of justice; but that the youth himself, whom there was nothing to criminate, had been suffered to quit Paris, and had taken, it was supposed, the road to England. Then, at last, the poor Captain's stout heart gave way. His son the companion of swindlers!—could he be sure that he was not their accomplice? If not yet, how small the step between companionship and participa-

tion! He took the child left him still from the convent, returned to England, and arrived there to be seized with fever and delirium — apparently on the same day (or a day before that on which) the son had dropped, shelterless and penniless, on the stones of London.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ATTEMPT TO BUILD A TEMPLE TO FORTUNE OUT OF THE RUINS OF HOME.

"But," said Vivian, pursuing his tale, "but when you came to my aid, not knowing me—when you relieved me—when from your own lips, for the first time, I heard words that praised me, and for qualities that implied I might yet be 'worth much'—Ah! (he added mournfully) I remember the very words—a new light broke upon me—struggling and dim, but light still. The ambition with which I had sought the truckling Frenchman revived, and took worthier and more definite form. I would lift myself above the mire, make a name, rise in life!"

Vivian's head drooped, but he raised it quickly, and laughed—his low, mocking laugh. What follows of this tale may be told succinctly. Retaining his bitter feelings towards his father, he resolved to continue his incognito—he gave himself a name likely to mislead conjecture, if I conversed of him to my family, since he knew that Roland was aware that a Colonel Vivian had been afflicted by a runaway son—and, indeed, the talk upon that subject had first put the notion of flight

into his own head. He caught at the idea of becoming known to Trevanion; but he saw reasons to forbid his being indebted to me for the introduction—to forbid my knowing where he was: sooner or later that knowledge could scarcely fail to end in the discovery of his real name. Fortunately, as he deemed, for the plans he began to meditate, we were all leaving London—he should have the stage to himself. And then boldly he resolved upon what he regarded as the master-scheme of life—viz. to obtain a small pecuniary independence, and to emancipate himself formally and entirely from his father's control. Aware of poor Roland's chivalrous reverence for his name, firmly persuaded that Roland had no love for the son, but only the dread that the son might disgrace him, he determined to avail himself of his father's prejudices in order to effect his purpose.

He wrote a short letter to Roland (that letter which had given the poor man so sanguine a joy—that letter after reading which he had said to Blanche, "pray for me"), stating simply that he wished to see his father, and naming a tavern in the City for the meeting.

The interview took place. And when Roland, love and forgiveness in his heart,—but (who shall blame him?) dignity on his brow and rebuke in his eye—approached, ready at a word to fling himself on the boy's breast, Vivian, seeing only the outer signs, and interpreting them by his own sentiments—recoiled, folded his arms on his bosom, and said coldly, "Spare me reproach, sir—it is unavailing. I seek you only to

propose that you shall save your name and resign your son."

Then, intent perhaps but to gain his object, the unhappy youth declared his fixed determination never to live with his father, never to acquiesce in his authority, resolutely to pursue his own career, whatever that career might be, explaining none of the circumstances that appeared most in his disfavour—rather, perhaps, thinking that, the worse his father judged of him, the more chance he had to achieve his purpose. "All I ask of you," he said, "is this: Give me the least you can afford to preserve me from the temptation to rob, or the necessity to starve; and I, in my turn, promise never to molest you in life—never to degrade you in my death; whatever my misdeeds, they will never reflect on yourself, for you shall never recognise the misdoer! The name you prize so highly shall be spared." Sickened and revolted, Roland attempted no argument—there was that in the son's cold manner which shut out hope, and against which his pride rose indignant. A meeker man might have remonstrated, implored, and wept—that was not in Roland's nature. He had but the choice of three evils, to say to his son, "Fool, I command thee to follow me!" or say, "Wretch, since thou wouldst cast me off as a stranger, as a stranger I say to thee—Go, starve or rob as thou wilt!" or lastly, to bow his proud head, stunned by the blow, and say, "Thou refusest me the obedience of the son, thou demandest to be as the dead to me. I can control thee not from vice, I can guide thee not to virtue. Thou

wouldst sell me the name I have inherited stainless, and have as stainless borne. Be it so!—Name thy price!"

And something like this last was the father's choice.

He listened, and was long silent; and then he said slowly, "Pause before you decide."

"I have paused long—my decision is made! this is the last time we meet. I see before me now the way to fortune, fairly, honourably; you can aid me in it only in the way I have said. Reject me now, and the option may never come again to either!"

And then Roland said to himself, "I have spared and saved for this son; what care I for aught else than enough to live without debt, creep into a corner, and await the grave! And the more I can give, why, the better chance that he will abjure the vile associate and the desperate course." And so, out of his small income, Roland surrendered to the rebel child more than the half.

Vivian was not aware of his father's fortune—he did not suppose the sum of two hundred pounds a-year was an allowance so disproportioned to Roland's means—yet when it was named, even he was struck by the generosity of one to whom he himself had given the right to say, "I take thee at thy word; 'just enough not to starve.'"

But then that hateful cynicism which, caught from bad men and evil books, he called "knowledge of the world," made him think "it is not for me, it is only for his name;" and he said aloud, "I accept these terms, sir; here is the address of a solicitor with whom yours can settle them. Farewell for ever."

At those last words Roland started, and stretched out his arms vaguely like a blind man. But Vivian had already thrown open the window (the room was on the ground-floor) and sprang upon the sill. "Farewell," he repeated: "tell the world I am dead."

He leapt into the street, and the father drew in the outstretched arms, smote his heart, and said—"Well, then, my task in the world of man is over! I will back to the old ruin—the wreck to the wrecks—and the sight of tombs I have at least rescued from dishonour shall comfort me for all!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE RESULTS—PERVERTED AMBITION—SELFISH PASSION—THE INTELLECT DISTORTED BY THE CROOKEDNESS OF THE HEART.

VIVIAN'S schemes thus prospered. He had an income that permitted him the outward appearances of a gentleman—an independence, modest indeed, but independence still. We were all gone from London. One letter to me with the postmark of the town near which Colonel Vivian lived, sufficed to confirm my belief in his parentage, and in his return to his friends. He then presented himself to Trevanion as the young man whose pen I had employed in the member's service; and knowing that I had never mentioned his name to Trevanion—for, without Vivian's permission, I should not, considering his apparent trust in me, have deemed myself authorised to do so—he took that of Gower, which he selected, haphazard, from an old Court Guide, as having the advantage—in common with most names borne by the higher nobility of England—of not being confined, as the ancient names of untitled gentlemen usually are, to the members of a single family. And when, with his wonted adaptability and suppleness, he

had contrived to lay aside, or smooth over, whatever in his manners would be calculated to displease Trevanion, and had succeeded in exciting the interest which that generous statesman always conceived for ability, he owned, candidly, one day, in the presence of Lady Ellinor—for his experience had taught him the comparative ease with which the sympathy of woman is enlisted in anything that appeals to the imagination, or seems out of the ordinary beat of life—that he had reasons for concealing his connections for the present—that he had cause to believe I suspected what they were, and, from mistaken regard for his welfare, might acquaint his relations with his whereabout. He therefore begged Trevanion, if the latter had occasion to write to me, not to mention him. This promise Trevanion gave, though reluctantly; for the confidence volunteered to him seemed to exact the promise; but as he detested mystery of all kinds, the avowal might have been fatal to any farther acquaintance; and under auspices so doubtful, there would have been no chance of his obtaining that intimacy in Trevanion's house which he desired to establish, but for an accident which at once opened that house to him almost as a home.

Vivian had always treasured a lock of his mother's hair, cut off on her deathbed; and when he was at his French tutor's, his first pocket-money had been devoted to the purchase of a locket, on which he had caused to be inscribed his own name and his mother's. Through all his wanderings he had worn this relic: and in the direst pangs of want, no hunger had been keen enough

to induce him to part with it. Now, one morning the ribbon that suspended the locket gave way, and his eye resting on the names inscribed on the gold, he thought, in his own vague sense of right, imperfect as it was, that his compact with his father obliged him to have the names erased. He took it to a jeweller in Piccadilly for that purpose, and gave the requisite order, not taking notice of a lady in the further part of the shop. The locket was still on the counter after Vivian had left, when the lady coming forward observed it, and saw the names on the surface. She had been struck by the peculiar tone of the voice, which she had heard before; and that very day Mr Gower received a note from Lady Ellinor Trevanion, requesting to see him. Much wondering, he went. Presenting him with the locket, she said smiling, "There is only one gentleman in the world who calls himself *De* Caxton, unless it be his son. Ah! I see now why you wished to conceal yourself from my friend Pisistratus. But how is this? can you have any difference with your father? Confide in me, or it is my duty to write to him."

Even Vivian's powers of dissimulation abandoned him, thus taken by surprise. He saw no alternative but to trust Lady Ellinor with his secret, and implore her to respect it. And then he spoke bitterly of his father's dislike to him, and his own resolution to prove the injustice of that dislike by the position he would himself establish in the world. At present, his father believed him dead, and perhaps was not ill-pleased to think so. He would not dispel that belief till he could redeem

any boyish errors, and force his family to be proud to acknowledge him.

Though Lady Ellinor was slow to believe that Roland could dislike his son, she could yet readily believe that he was harsh and choleric, with a soldier's high notions of discipline: the young man's story moved her, his determination pleased her own high spirit; always with a touch of romance in her, and always sympathising with each desire of ambition, she entered into Vivian's aspirations with an alacrity that surprised himself. She was charmed with the idea of ministering to the son's fortunes, and ultimately reconciling him to the father—through her own agency;—it would atone for any fault of which Roland could accuse herself in the old time.

She undertook to impart the secret to Trevanion, for she would have no secrets from him, and to secure his acquiescence in its concealment from all others.

And here I must a little digress from the chronological course of my explanatory narrative, to inform the reader that, when Lady Ellinor had her interview with Roland, she had been repelled by the sternness of his manner from divulging Vivian's secret. But on her first attempt to sound or conciliate him, she had begun with some eulogies on Trevanion's new friend and assistant, Mr Gower, and had awakened Roland's suspicions of that person's identity with his son—suspicions which had given him a terrible interest in our joint deliverance of Miss Trevanion. But so heroically had the poor soldier sought to resist his own fears, that on the way he shrank to put to me the questions that might paralyse

the energies which, whatever the answer, were then so much needed. "For," said he to my father, "I felt the blood surging to my temples; and if I had said to Pisistratus, 'Describe this man,' and by his description I had recognised my son, and dreaded lest I might be too late to arrest him from so treacherous a crime, my brain would have given way;—and so I did not dare!"

I return to the thread of my story. From the time that Vivian confided in Lady Ellinor, the way was cleared to his most ambitious hopes; and though his acquisitions were not sufficiently scholastic and various to permit Trevanion to select him as a secretary, yet, short of sleeping at the house, he was little less intimate there than I had been.

Among Vivian's schemes of advancement, that of winning the hand and heart of the great heiress had not been one of the least sanguine. This hope was annulled when, not long after his intimacy at her father's house, she became engaged to young Lord Castleton. But he could not see Miss Trevanion with impunity—(alas! who, with a heart yet free, could be insensible to attractions so winning?) He permitted the love—such love as his wild, half-educated, half-savage nature acknowledged—to creep into his soul—to master it; but he felt no hope, cherished no scheme while the young lord lived. With the death of her betrothed, Fanny was free; then he began to hope—not yet to scheme. Accidentally he encountered Peacock—partly from the levity that accompanied a false goodnature that was constitutional with him, partly

from a vague idea that the man might be useful, Vivian established his quondam associate in the service of Trevanion. Peacock soon gained the secret of Vivian's love for Fanny, and, dazzled by the advantages that a marriage with Miss Trevanion would confer on his patron, and might reflect on himself, and delighted at an occasion to exercise his dramatic accomplishments on the stage of real life, he soon practised the lesson that the theatres had taught him—viz. to make a sub-intrigue between maid and valet serve the schemes and insure the success of the lover. If Vivian had some opportunities to imply his admiration, Miss Trevanion gave him none to plead his cause. But the softness of her nature, and that graceful kindness which surrounded her like an atmosphere, emanating unconsciously from a girl's harmless desire to please, tended to deceive him. His own personal gifts were so rare, and, in his wandering life, the effect they had produced had so increased his reliance on them, that he thought he wanted but the fair opportunity to woo in order to win. In this state of mental intoxication, Trevanion having provided for his Scotch secretary, took him to Lord N——'s. His hostess was one of those middle-aged ladies of fashion, who like to patronise and bring forward young men, accepting gratitude for condescension, as a homage to beauty. She was struck by Vivian's exterior, and that "picturesque" in look and in manner which belonged to him. Naturally garrulous and indiscreet, she was unreserved to a pupil whom she conceived the whim to make "*au fait* to

society." Thus she talked to him, among other topics in fashion, of Miss Trevanion, and expressed her belief that the present Lord Castleton had always admired her; but it was only on his accession to the marquisate that he had made up his mind to marry, or, from his knowledge of Lady Ellinor's ambition, thought that the Marquess of Castleton might achieve the prize which would have been refused to Sir Sedley Beaudesert. Then, to corroborate the predictions she hazarded, she repeated, perhaps with exaggeration, some passages from Lord Castleton's replies to her own suggestions on the subject. Vivian's alarm became fatally excited; unregulated passions easily obscured a reason so long perverted, and a conscience so habitually dulled. There is an instinct in all intense affection (whether it be corrupt or pure) that usually makes its jealousy prophetic. Thus, from the first, out of all the brilliant idlers round Fanny Trevanion, my jealousy had preeminently fastened on Sir Sedley Beaudesert, though, to all seeming, without a cause. From the same instinct, Vivian had conceived the same vague jealousy—a jealousy, in his instance, coupled with a deep dislike to his supposed rival, who had wounded his self-love. For the Marquess, though to be haughty or ill-bred was impossible to the blandness of his nature, had never shown to Vivian the genial courtesies he had lavished upon me, and kept politely aloof from his acquaintance —while Vivian's personal vanity had been wounded by that drawing-room effect which the proverbial winner of all hearts produced without an effort—an effect

that threw into the shade the youth and the beauty (more striking, but infinitely less prepossessing) of the adventurous rival. Thus animosity to Lord Castleton conspired with Vivian's passion for Fanny to rouse all that was worst by nature and by rearing in this audacious and turbulent spirit.

His confidant Peacock suggested, from his stage experience, the outlines of a plot, to which Vivian's astuter intellect instantly gave tangibility and colouring. Peacock had already found Miss Trevanion's waiting-woman ripe for any measure that might secure himself as her husband, and a provision for life as a reward. Two or three letters between them settled the preliminary engagements. A friend of the ex-comedian's had lately taken an inn on the north road, and might be relied upon. At that inn it was settled that Vivian should meet Miss Trevanion, whom Peacock, by the aid of the abigail, engaged to lure there. The sole difficulty that then remained would, to most men, have seemed the greatest—viz. the consent of Miss Trevanion to a Scotch marriage. But Vivian hoped all things from his own eloquence, art, and passion; and by an inconsistency, however strange, still not unnatural in the twists of so crooked an intellect, he thought that, by insisting on the intention of her parents to sacrifice her youth to the very man of whose attractions he was most jealous—by the picture of disparity of years, by the caricature of his rival's foibles and frivolities, by the common-places of "beauty bartered for ambition," &c., he might enlist her fears of

the alternative on the side of the choice urged upon her. The plan proceeded, the time came: Peacock pretended the excuse of a sick relation to leave Trevanion; and Vivian a day before, on pretence of visiting the picturesque scenes in the neighbourhood, obtained leave of absence. Thus the plot went on to its catastrophe.

"And I need not ask," said I, trying in vain to conceal my indignation, "how Miss Trevanion received your monstrous proposition!"

Vivian's pale cheek grew paler, but he made no reply.

"And if we had not arrived, what would you have done? Oh, dare you look into the gulf of infamy you have escaped!"

"I cannot, and I will not bear this!" exclaimed Vivian, starting up. "I have laid my heart bare before you, and it is ungenerous and unmanly thus to press upon its wounds. You can moralise, you can speak coldly—but—I—I loved!"

"And do you think," I burst forth—"do you think that I did not love too!—love longer than you have done; better than you have done; gone through sharper struggles, darker days, more sleepless nights than you,—and yet—"

Vivian caught hold of me.

"Hush!" he cried; "is this indeed true! I thought you might have had some faint and fleeting fancy for Miss Trevanion, but that you curbed and conquered it at once. Oh no! it was impossible to have loved really, and to have surrendered all chance as you did! —have left the house, have fled from her presence! No—no! that was not love!"

"It *was* love! and I pray Heaven to grant that, one day, you may know how little your affection sprang from those feelings which make true love sublime as honour, and meek as is religion! Oh! cousin, cousin —with those rare gifts, what you might have been! what, if you will pass through repentance, and cling to atonement—what, I dare hope, you may yet be. Talk not now of your love; I talk not of mine! Love is a thing gone from the lives of both. Go back to earlier thoughts, to heavier wrongs!—your father!—that noble heart which you have so wantonly lacerated, which you have so little comprehended!"

Then with all the warmth of emotion I hurried on —showed him the true nature of honour and of Roland (for the names were one)!—showed him the watch, the hope, the manly anguish I had witnessed, and wept— I, not his son—to see; showed him the poverty and privation to which the father, even at the last, had condemned himself, so that the son might have no excuse for the sins that Want whispers to the weak. This, and much more, and I suppose with the pathos that belongs to all earnestness, I enforced, sentence after sentence—yielding to no interruption, over-mastering all dissent! driving in the truth, nail after nail, as it were, into the obdurate heart, that I constrained and grappled to. And at last, the dark, bitter, cynical nature gave way, and the young man fell sobbing at my feet, and cried aloud, "Spare me, spare me! I see it all now! Wretch that I have been!"

CHAPTER VIII.

On leaving Vivian I did not presume to promise him Roland's immediate pardon. I did not urge him to attempt to see his father. I felt the time was not come for either pardon or interview. I contented myself with the victory I had already gained. I judged it right that thought, solitude, and suffering, should imprint more deeply the lesson, and prepare the way to the steadfast resolution of reform. I left him seated by the stream, and with the promise to inform him at the small hostelry, where he took up his lodgings, how Roland struggled through his illness.

On returning to the inn, I was uneasy to see how long a time had elapsed since I had left my uncle. But on coming into his room, to my surprise and relief, I found him up and dressed, and with a serene, though fatigued, expression of countenance. He asked me no questions where I had been—perhaps from sympathy with my feelings in parting with Miss Trevanion—perhaps from conjecture that the indulgence of those feelings had not wholly engrossed my time.

But he said simply, "I think I understood from you that you had sent for Austin—is it so?"

"Yes, sir; but I named * * *, as the nearest point to the Tower, for the place of meeting."

"Then let us go hence forthwith—nay, I shall be better for the change. And here, there must be curiosity, conjecture—torture!"—said he, locking his hands tightly together: "order the horses at once!"

I left the room accordingly; and while they were getting ready the horses, I ran to the place where I had left Vivian. He was still there, in the same attitude, covering his face with his hands, as if to shut out the sun. I told him hastily of Roland's improvement, of our approaching departure, and asked him an address in London at which I could find him. He gave me as his direction the same lodging at which I had so often visited him. "If there be no vacancy there for me," said he, "I shall leave word where I am to be found. But I would gladly be where I was before—" He did not finish the sentence. I pressed his hand, and left him.

CHAPTER IX.

Some days have elapsed: we are in London, my father with us; and Roland has permitted Austin to tell me his tale, and receive through Austin all that Vivian's narrative to me suggested, whether in extenuation of the past, or in hope of redemption in the future. And Austin has inexpressibly soothed his brother. And Roland's ordinary roughness has gone, and his looks are meek, and his voice low. But he talks little, and smiles never. He asks me no questions; does not to *me* name his son, nor recur to the voyage to Australia, nor ask "why it is put off;" nor interest himself as before in preparations for it—he has no heart for anything.

The voyage *is* put off till the next vessel sails, and I have seen Vivian twice or thrice, and the result of the interviews has disappointed and depressed me. It seems to me that much of the previous effect I had produced is already obliterated. At the very sight of the great Babel—the evidence of the ease, the luxury, the wealth, the pomp;—the strife, the penury, the famine, and the rags, which the focus of civilisation, in the disparities of old societies, inevitably gathers

together—the fierce combative disposition seemed to awaken again; the perverted ambition, the hostility to the world; the wrath, the scorn; the war with man, and the rebellious murmur against Heaven. There was still the one redeeming point of repentance for his wrongs to his father—his heart was still softened there; and, attendant on that softness, I hailed a principle more like that of honour than I had yet recognised in Vivian. He cancelled the agreement which had assured him of a provision at the cost of his father's comforts. "At least, there," he said, "I will injure him no more!"

But while, on this point, repentance seemed genuine, it was not so with regard to his conduct towards Miss Trevanion. His gipsy nurture, his loose associates, his extravagant French romances, his theatrical mode of looking upon love intrigues and stage plots, seemed all to rise between his intelligence and the due sense of the fraud and treachery he had practised. He seemed to feel more shame at the exposure than at the guilt; more despair at the failure of success than gratitude at escape from crime. In a word, the nature of a whole life was not to be remodelled at once—at least by an artificer so unskilled as I.

After one of these interviews, I stole into the room where Austin sat with Roland, and, watching a seasonable moment when Roland, shaking off a reverie, opened his Bible, and sat down to it, with each muscle in his face set, as I had seen it before, into iron resolution, I beckoned my father from the room.

PISISTRATUS.—"I have again seen my cousin. I cannot make the way I wished. My dear father, *you* must see him."

MR CAXTON.—"I?—yes, assuredly, if I can be of any service. But will he listen to me?"

PISISTRATUS.—"I think so. A young man will often respect in his elder, what he will resent as a presumption in his contemporary."

MR CAXTON.—"It may be so: (then more thoughtfully) but you describe this strange boy's mind as a wreck!—in what part of the mouldering timbers can I fix the grappling-hook? Here, it seems that most of the supports on which we can best rely, when we would save another, fail us. Religion, honour, the associations of childhood, the bonds of home, filial obedience—even the intelligence of self-interest, in the philosophical sense of the word. And I, too!—a mere bookman! My dear son!—I despair!"

PISISTRATUS.—"No, you do not despair,—no, you must succeed; for, if you do not, what is to become of Uncle Roland? Do you not see his heart is fast breaking?"

MR CAXTON.—"Get me my hat; I will go. I will save this Ishmael—I will not leave him till he is saved!"

PISISTRATUS (some minutes after, as they are walking towards Vivian's lodging).—"You ask me what support you are to cling to. A strong and a good one, sir."

MR CAXTON.—"Ah! what is that?"

PISISTRATUS.—"Affection! there is a nature capable of strong affection at the core of this wild heart! He could love his mother; tears gush to his eyes at her name—he would have starved rather than part with the memorial of that love. It was his belief in his father's indifference, or dislike, that hardened and embruted him—it is only when he hears how that father loved him, that I now melt his pride and curb his passions. You have affection to deal with!—do you despair now?"

My father turned on me those eyes so inexpressibly benign and mild, and replied softly, "No!"

We reached the house; and my father said, as we knocked at the door, "If he is at home, leave me. This is a hard study to which you have set me; I must work at it alone."

Vivian was at home, and the door closed on his visitor. My father stayed some hours.

On returning home, to my great surprise, I found Trevanion with my uncle. He had found us out—no easy matter, I should think. But a good impulse in Trevanion was not of that feeble kind which turns home at the sight of a difficulty. He had come to London on purpose to see and to thank us.

I did not think there had been so much of delicacy—of what I may call the "beauty of kindess"—in a man whom incessant business had rendered ordinarily blunt and abrupt. I hardly recognised the impatient Trevanion in the soothing, tender, subtle respect that

rather implied than spoke gratitude, and sought to insinuate what he owed to the unhappy father, without touching on his wrongs from the son. But of this kindness—which showed how Trevanion's high nature of gentleman raised him aloof from that coarseness of thought which those absorbed wholly in practical affairs often contract—of this kindness, so noble and so touching, Roland seemed scarcely aware. He sat by the embers of the neglected fire, his hands grasping the arms of his elbow-chair, his head drooping on his bosom ; and only by a deep hectic flush on his dark cheek could you have seen that he distinguished between an ordinary visitor and the man whose child he had helped to save. This minister of state—this high member of the elect, at whose gift are places, peerages, gold sticks, and ribbons—has nothing at his command for the bruised spirit of the half-pay soldier. Before that poverty, that grief, and that pride, the King's Counsellor was powerless. Only when Trevanion rose to depart, something like a sense of the soothing intention which the visit implied seemed to rouse the repose of the old man, and to break the ice at its surface ; for he followed Trevanion to the door, took both his hands, pressed them, then turned away, and resumed his seat. Trevanion beckoned to me, and I followed him down stairs, and into a little parlour which was unoccupied.

After some remarks upon Roland, full of deep and considerate feeling, and one quick, hurried reference to

the son—to the effect that his guilty attempt would never be known by the world—Trevanion then addressed himself to me with a warmth and urgency that took me by surprise. "After what has passed," he exclaimed, "I cannot suffer you to leave England thus. Let me not feel with you, as with your uncle, that there is nothing by which I can repay—no, I will not so put it—stay and serve your country at home: it is my prayer, it is Ellinor's. Out of all at my disposal it will go hard but what I shall find something to suit you." And then, hurrying on, Trevanion spoke flatteringly of my pretensions, in right of birth and capabilities, to honourable employment, and placed before me a picture of public life—its prizes and distinctions—which, for the moment at least, made my heart beat loud and my breath come quick. But still, even then, I felt (was it an unreasonable pride?) that there was something that jarred, something that humbled, in the thought of holding all my fortunes as a dependency on the father of the woman I loved, but might not aspire to;—something even of personal degradation in the mere feeling that I was thus to be repaid for a service, and recompensed for a loss. But these were not reasons I could advance; and, indeed, so for the time did Trevanion's generosity and eloquence overpower me, that I could only falter out my thanks, and my promise that I would consider and let him know.

With that promise he was forced to content himself;

he told me to direct to him at his favourite country-seat, whither he was going that day, and so left me. I looked round the humble parlour of the mean lodging-house, and Trevanion's words came again before me like a flash of golden light. I stole into the open air, and wandered through the crowded streets, agitated and disturbed.

CHAPTER X.

Several days elapsed—and of each day my father spent a considerable part at Vivian's lodgings. But he maintained a reserve as to his success, begged me not to question him, and to refrain also for the present from visiting my cousin. My uncle guessed or knew his brother's mission; for I observed that, whenever Austin went noiselessly away, his eye brightened, and the colour rose in a hectic flush to his cheek. At last my father came to me one morning, his carpet-bag in his hand, and said, "I am going away for a week or two. Keep Roland company till I return."

"Going with *him?*"

"With him."

"That is a good sign."

"I hope so: that is all I can say now."

The week had not quite passed when I received from my father the letter I am about to place before the reader, and you may judge how earnestly his soul must have been in the task it had volunteered, if you observe how little, comparatively speaking, the letter contains of the subtleties and pedantries (may the last word be pardoned, for it is scarcely a just one) which

ordinarily left my father a scholar even in the midst of his emotions. He seemed here to have abandoned his books, to have put the human heart before the eyes of his pupil, and said, "Read and *un*-learn!"

"To Pisistratus Caxton.

"My dear Son,—It were needless to tell you all the earlier difficulties I have had to encounter with my charge, nor to repeat all the means which, acting on your suggestion (a correct one), I have employed to arouse feelings long dormant and confused, and allay others, long prematurely active and terribly distinct. The evil was simply this: here was the intelligence of a man in all that is evil—and the ignorance of an infant in all that is good. In matters merely worldly, what wonderful acumen! in the plain principles of right and wrong, what gross and stolid obtuseness! At one time, I am straining all my poor wit to grapple in an encounter on the knottiest mysteries of social life; at another, I am guiding reluctant fingers over the horn-book of the most obvious morals. Here hieroglyphics, and there pot-hooks. But as long as there is affection in a man, why, there is Nature to begin with! To get rid of all the rubbish laid upon her, clear back the way to that Nature, and start afresh—that is one's only chance.

"Well, by degrees I won my way, waiting patiently till the bosom, pleased with the relief, disgorged itself of all its 'perilous stuff,'—not chiding—not even re-

monstrating, seeming almost to sympathise, till I got him, Socratically, to disprove himself. When I saw that he no longer feared me—that my company had become a relief to him—I proposed an excursion and did not tell him whither.

"Avoiding as much as possible the main north road (for I did not wish, as you may suppose, to set fire to a train of associations that might blow us up to the dog-star), and where that avoidance was not possible, travelling by night, I got him into the neighbourhood of the old Tower. I would not admit him under its roof. But you know the little inn, three miles off, near the trout stream?—we made our abode there.

"Well, I have taken him into the village, preserving his incognito. I have entered with him into cottages, and turned the talk upon Roland. You know how your uncle is adored; you know what anecdotes of his bold warm-hearted youth once, and now of his kind and charitable age, would spring up from the garrulous lips of gratitude! I made him see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears, how all who knew Roland loved and honoured him—except his son. Then I took him round the ruins—(still not suffering him to enter the house), for those ruins are the key to Roland's character—seeing them, one sees the pathos in his poor foible of family pride. There, you distinguish it from the insolent boasts of the prosperous, and feel that it is little more than the pious reverence to the dead—'the tender culture of the tomb.' We sat down on heaps of mouldering stone, and it was

there that I explained to him what Roland was in youth, and what he had dreamed that a son would be to him. I showed him the graves of his ancestors, and explained to him why they were sacred in Roland's eyes! I had gained a great way, when he longed to enter the home that should have been his; and I could make him pause of his own accord, and say, 'No, I must first be worthy of it.' Then you would have smiled—sly satirist that you are—to have heard me impressing upon this acute, sharp-witted youth, all that we plain folk understand by the name of HOME—its perfect trust and truth, its simple holiness, its exquisite happiness—being to the world what conscience is to the human mind. And after that, I brought in his sister, whom till then he had scarcely named—for whom he scarcely seemed to care—brought her in to aid the father, and endear the home. 'And you know,' said I, 'that if Roland were to die, it would be a brother's duty to supply his place; to shield her innocence—to protect her name! A good name is something, then. Your father was not so wrong to prize it. You would like yours to be that which your sister would be proud to own!'

"While we were talking, Blanche suddenly came to the spot, and rushed to my arms. She looked on him as a stranger; but I saw his knees tremble. And then she was about to put her hand in his—but I drew her back. Was I cruel? He thought so. But when I dismissed her, I replied to his reproach, 'Your sister is a part of Home. If you think yourself worthy of

either, go and claim both; I will not object.'—'She has my mother's eyes,' said he, and walked away. I left him to muse amidst the ruins, while I went in to see your poor mother, and relieve her fears about Roland, and make her understand why I could not yet return *home*.

"This brief sight of his sister has sunk deep into him. But I now approach what seems to me the great difficulty of the whole. He is fully anxious to redeem his name—to regain his home. So far so well. But he cannot yet see ambition, except with hard worldly eyes. He still fancies that all he has to do is to get money and power, and some of those empty prizes in the Great Lottery, which we often win more easily by our sins than our virtues. (Here follows a long passage from Seneca, omitted as superfluous.) He does not yet even understand me—or, if he does, he fancies me a mere book-worm indeed, when I imply that he might be poor, and obscure, at the bottom of fortune's wheel, and yet be one we should be proud of! He supposes that, to redeem his name, he has only got to lacker it. Don't think me merely the fond father, when I add my hope that I shall use you to advantage here. I mean to talk to him to-morrow, as we return to London, of you, and of your ambition: you shall hear the result.

"At this moment (it is past midnight), I hear his step in the room above me. The window-sash aloft opens—for the third time: would to heaven he could read the true astrology of the stars! There they are—

bright, luminous, benignant. And I seeking to chain this wandering comet into the harmonies of heaven! Better task than that of astrologers, and astronomers to boot! Who among them can 'loosen the band of Orion?'—but who amongst us may not be permitted by God to have sway over the action and orbit of the human soul?

"Your ever affectionate father,

"A. C."

Two days after the receipt of this letter, came the following; and though I would fain suppress those references to myself which must be ascribed to a father's partiality, yet it is so needful to retain them in connection with Vivian, that I have no choice but to leave the tender flatteries to the indulgence of the kind:—

"My dear Son,—I was not too sanguine as to the effect that your simple story would produce upon your cousin. Without implying any contrast to his own conduct, I described that scene in which you threw yourself upon our sympathy, in the struggle between love and duty, and asked for our counsel and support; when Roland gave you his blunt advice to tell all to Trevanion; and when, amidst such sorrow as the heart in youth seems scarcely large enough to hold, you caught at truth impulsively, and the truth bore you safe from the shipwreck. I recounted your silent and manly struggles—your resolution not to suffer the egotism of

passion to unfit you for the aims and ends of that spiritual probation which we call LIFE. I showed you as you were, still thoughtful for us, interested in our interests—smiling on us, that we might not guess that you wept in secret! Oh, my son—my son! do not think that, in those times, I did not feel and pray for you! And while he was melted by my own emotion, I turned from your love to your ambition. I made him see that you, too, had known the restlessness which belongs to young ardent natures; that you, too, had your dreams of fortune, and aspirations for success. But I painted that ambition in its true colours: it was not the desire of a selfish intellect, to be in yourself a somebody—a something—raised a step or two in the social ladder, for the pleasure of looking down on those at the foot, but the warmer yearning of a generous heart: your ambition was to repair your father's losses —minister to your father's very foible, in *his* idle desire of fame—supply to your uncle what he had lost in his natural heir—link your success to useful objects, your interests to those of your kind, your reward to the proud and grateful smiles of those you loved. That was thine ambition, O my tender Anachronism! And when, as I closed the sketch, I said, 'Pardon me: you know not what delight a father feels, when, while sending a son away from him into the world, he can speak and think thus of him! But this, you see, is not your kind of ambition. Let us talk of making money, and driving a coach-and-four through this villanous world,' —your cousin sank into a profound reverie; and when

he woke from it, it was like the waking of the earth after a night in spring—the bare trees had put forth buds !

"And some time after, he startled me by a prayer that I would permit him, with his father's consent, to accompany you to Australia. The only answer I have given him as yet, has been in the form of a question : 'Ask yourself if I ought. I cannot wish Pisistratus to be other than he is ; and unless you agree with him in all his principles and objects, ought I to incur the risk that you should give him your knowledge of the world, and inoculate him with your ambition?' He was struck, and had the candour to attempt no reply.

"Now, Pisistratus, the doubt I expressed to him is the doubt I feel. For, indeed, it is only by home-truths, not refining arguments, that I can deal with this unscholastic Scythian, who, fresh from the Steppes, comes to puzzle me in the portico.

"On the one hand, what is to become of him in the Old World? At his age, and with his energies, it would be impossible to cage him with us in the Cumberland ruins ; weariness and discontent would undo all we could do. He has no resource in books—and, I fear, never will have ! But to send him forth into one of the overcrowded professions ; to place him amidst all those 'disparities of social life,' on the rough stones of which he is perpetually grinding his heart ; turn him adrift amongst all the temptations to which he is most prone ; this is a trial which, I fear, will be too sharp for a conversion so incomplete. In the New World, no doubt,

his energies would find a safer field; and even the adventurous and desultory habits of his childhood might there be put to healthful account. Those complaints of the disparities of the civilised world find, I suspect, an easier, if a bluffer reply from the political economist than the Stoic philosopher. 'You don't like them, you find it hard to submit to them,' says the political economist; 'but they are the laws of a civilised state, and you can't alter them. Wiser men than you have tried to alter them, and never succeeded, though they turned the earth topsy-turvy! Very well; but the world is wide—go into a state that is not so civilised. The disparities of the Old World vanish amidst the New! Emigration is the reply of Nature to the rebellious cry against Art.' Thus would say the political economist; and, alas, even in your case, my son, I found no reply to the reasonings! I acknowledge, then, that Australia might open the best safety-valve to your cousin's discontent and desires; but I acknowledge also a counter-truth, which is this—'It is not permitted to an honest man to corrupt himself for the sake of others.' That is almost the only maxim of Jean Jacques to which I can cheerfully subscribe! Do you feel quite strong enough to resist all the influences which a companionship of this kind may subject you to; strong enough to bear his burthen as well as your own; strong enough, also — ay, and alert and vigilant enough — to prevent those influences harming the others, whom you have undertaken to guide, and whose lots are confided to you? Pause well, and consider maturely, for this must

not depend upon a generous impulse. I think that your cousin would now pass under your charge with a sincere desire for reform; but between sincere desire and steadfast performance there is a long and dreary interval, even to the best of us. Were it not for Roland, and had I one grain less confidence in you, I could not entertain the thought of laying on your young shoulders so great a responsibility. But every new responsibility to an earnest nature is a new prop to virtue; and all I now ask of you is—to remember that it *is* a solemn and serious charge, not to be undertaken without the most deliberate guage and measure of the strength with which it is to be borne.

"In two days we shall be in London.—Yours, my Anachronism, anxiously and fondly,

"A. C."

I was in my own room while I read this letter, and I had just finished it when, as I looked up, I saw Roland standing opposite to me. "It is from Austin," said he; then he paused a moment, and added, in a tone that seemed quite humble, "May I see it?—and dare I?" I placed the letter in his hands, and retired a few paces, that he might not think I watched his countenance while he read it. And I was only aware that he had come to the end by a heavy, anxious, but not disappointed sigh. Then I turned, and our eyes met, and there was something in Roland's look, inquiring—and, as it were, imploring. I interpreted it at once.

"Oh, yes, uncle," I said, smiling; "I have reflected, and I have no fear of the result. Before my father wrote, what he now suggests had become my secret wish. As for our other companions, their simple natures would defy all such sophistries as—but he is already half-cured of those. Let him come with me, and when he returns he shall be worthy of a place in your heart, beside his sister Blanche. I feel, I promise it—do not fear for me! Such a change will be a talisman to myself. I will shun every error that I might otherwise commit, so that he may have no example to entice him to err."

I know that in youth, and the superstition of first love, we are credulously inclined to believe that love, and the possession of the beloved, are the only happiness. But when my uncle folded me in his arms, and called me the hope of his age, and stay of his house—the music of my father's praise still ringing on my heart—I do affirm that I knew a prouder bliss than if Trevanion had placed Fanny's hand in mine, and said, "She is yours."

And now the die was cast—the decision made. It was with no regret that I wrote to Trevanion to decline his offers. Nor was the sacrifice so great—even putting aside the natural pride which had before inclined to it—as it may seem to some; for, restless though I was, I had laboured to constrain myself to other views of life than those which close the vistas of ambition with images of the terrestrial deities — Power and Rank. Had I not been behind the scenes, noted all of joy

and of peace that the pursuit of power had cost Trevanion, and seen how little of happiness rank gave even to one of the polished habits and graceful attributes of Lord Castleton? Yet each nature seemed fitted so well—the first for power, the last for rank! It is marvellous with what liberality Providence atones for the partial dispensations of Fortune. Independence, or the vigorous pursuit of it; affection, with its hopes and its rewards; a life only rendered by Art more susceptible to Nature—in which the physical enjoyments are pure and healthful—in which the moral faculties expand harmoniously with the intellectual—and the heart is at peace with the mind; is this a mean lot for ambition to desire—and is it so far out of human reach? "Know thyself," said the old philosophy. "Improve thyself," saith the new. The great object of the Sojourner in Time is not to waste all his passions and gifts on the things external, that he must leave behind —that which he cultivates within is all that he can carry into the Eternal Progress. We are here but as schoolboys, whose life begins where school ends; and the battles we fought with our rivals, and the toys that we shared with our playmates, and the names that we carved, high or low, on the wall, above our desks—will they so much bestead us hereafter? As new fates crowd upon us, can they more than pass through the memory with a smile or a sigh? Look back to thy school-days, and answer.

CHAPTER XI.

Two weeks since the date of the preceding chapter, have passed ; we have slept our last, for long years to come, on the English soil. It is night—and Vivian has been admitted to an interview with his father. They have been together alone an hour and more, and I and my father will not disturb them. But the clock strikes—the hour is late—the ship sails to-night—we should be on board. And as we two stand below, the door opens in the room above, and a heavy step descends the stairs ; the father is leaning on the son's arm. You should see how timidly the son guides the halting step. And now as the light gleams on their faces, there are tears on Vivian's cheek : but the face of Roland seems calm and happy. Happy ! when about to be separated, perhaps for ever, from his son ? Yes, happy, because he has found a son for the first time ; and is not thinking of years and absence, and the chance of death—but thankful for the Divine Mercy, and cherishing celestial hope. If ye wonder why Roland is happy in such an hour, how vainly have I sought to make him breathe, and live, and move before you !

. . . . . .

We are on board ; our luggage all went first. I had had time, with the help of a carpenter, to knock up cabins for Vivian, Guy Bolding, and myself, in the hold. For, thinking we could not too soon lay aside the pretensions of Europe—"*de*-fine-gentlemanise" ourselves, as Trevanion recommended—we had engaged steerage passage, to the great humouring of our finances. We had, too, the luxury to be by ourselves, and our own Cumberland folks were round us, as our friends and servants both.

We are on board, and have looked our last on those we are to leave, and we stand on deck leaning on each other. We are on board, and the lights, near and far, shine from the vast City ; and the stars are on high, bright and clear, as for the first mariners of old. Strange noises, rough voices, and crackling cords, and here and there the sobs of women, mingling with the oaths of men. Now the swing and heave of the vessel—the dreary sense of exile that comes when the ship fairly moves over the waters. And still we stood, and looked, and listened ; silent, and leaning on each other.

Night deepened, the City vanished—not a gleam from its myriad lights ! The river widened and widened. How cold comes the wind !—is that a gale from the sea ? The stars grow faint—the moon has sunk. And now how desolate seem the waters in the comfortless grey of dawn ! Then we shivered and looked at each other, and muttered something that was not the thought deepest at our hearts, and crept into our berths—feeling sure it was not for sleep. And sleep came on us, soft and kind. The ocean lulled the exiles as on a mother's breast.

PART SEVENTEENTH.

CHAPTER I.

The stage-scene has dropped. Settle yourselves, my good audience ; chat each with his neighbour. Dear madam, in the boxes, take up your opera-glass and look about you. Treat Tom and pretty Sal to some of those fine oranges, O thou happy looking mother in the two-shilling gallery ! Yes, brave 'prentice boys, in the tier above, the cat-call by all means ! And you, "most potent, grave, and reverend seigneurs," in the front row of the pit—practised critics and steady old play-goers—who shake your heads at new actors and play-wrights, and, true to the creed of your youth (for the which all honour to you !) firmly believe that we are shorter by the head than those giants our grandfathers —laugh or scold as you will, while the drop-scene still shuts out the stage. It is just that you should all amuse yourselves in your own way, O spectators ! for the interval is long. All the actors have to change their dresses ; all the scene-shifters are at work, sliding

the "sides" of a new world into their grooves; and in high disdain of all unity of time, as of place, you will see in the playbills that there is a great demand on your belief. You are called upon to suppose that we are older by five years than when you last saw us "fret our hour upon the stage." Five years! the author tells us especially to humour the belief by letting the drop-scene linger longer than usual between the lamps and the stage.

Play up! O ye fiddles and kettle-drums! the time is elapsed. Stop that cat-call young gentleman!—heads down in the pit there! Now the flourish is over—the scene draws up: look before.

A bright, clear, transparent atmosphere—bright as that of the East, but vigorous and bracing as the air of the North; a broad and fair river, rolling through wide grassy plains; yonder, far in the distance, stretch away vast forests of evergreen, and gentle slopes break the line of the cloudless horizon; see the pastures, Arcadian with sheep in hundreds and thousands—Thyrsis and Menalcas would have had hard labour to count them, and small time, I fear, for singing songs about Daphne. But, alas! Daphnes are rare; no nymphs with garlands and crooks trip over those pastures.

Turn your eyes to the right, nearer the river; just parted by a low fence from the thirty acres or so that are farmed for amusement or convenience, not for profit—*that* comes from the sheep—you catch a glimpse of a garden. Look not so scornfully at the primitive horticulture—such gardens are rare in the Bush. I doubt

if the stately King of the Peak ever more rejoiced in the famous conservatory, through which you may drive in your carriage, than do the sons of the Bush in the herbs and blossoms which taste and breathe of the old fatherland. Go on, and behold the palace of the patriarchs—it is of wood, I grant you, but the house we build with our own hands is always a palace. Did you ever build one when you were a boy? And the lords of that palace are lords of the land, almost as far as you can see, and of those numberless flocks; and better still, of a health which an antediluvian might have envied, and of nerves so seasoned with horse-breaking, cattle-driving, fighting with wild blacks—chases from them and after them, for life and for death—that if any passion vex the breast of those kings of the Bushland, fear at least is erased from the list.

See here and there through the landscape, rude huts like the masters'—wild spirits and fierce dwell within. But they are tamed into order by plenty and hope; by the hand open but firm, by the eye keen but just.

Now, out from those woods, over those green rolling plains, harum-scarum, helter-skelter, long hair flying wild, and all bearded, as a Turk or a pard, comes a rider you recognise. The rider dismounts, and another old acquaintance turns from a shepherd, with whom he has been conversing on matters that never plagued Thyrsis and Menalcas, whose sheep seem to have been innocent of foot-rot and scab—and accosts the horseman.

PISISTRATUS.—"My dear Guy, where on earth have you been?"

Guy (producing a book from his pocket, with great triumph).—"There! Dr Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*. I could not get the squatter to let me have *Kenilworth*, though I offered him three sheep for it. Dull old fellow, that Dr Johnson, I suspect; so much the better, the book will last all the longer. And here's a Sydney paper, too, only two months old!" (Guy takes a short pipe, or dodeen, from his hat, in the band of which it had been stuck, fills and lights it.)

Pisistratus.—"You must have ridden thirty miles at the least. To think of *your* turning book-hunter, Guy!"

Guy Bolding (philosophically).—"Ay, one don't know the worth of a thing till one has lost it. No sneers at me, old fellow; you, too, declared that you were bothered out of your life by those books, till you found how long the evenings were without them. Then, the first new book we got—an old volume of the *Spectator!*—such fun!"

Pisistratus.—"Very true. The brown cow has calved in your absence. Do you know, Guy, I think we shall have no scab in the fold this year. If so, there will be a rare sum to lay by! Things look up with us now, Guy."

Guy Bolding.—"Yes! Very different from the first two years. You drew a long face then. How wise you were, to insist on our learning experience at another man's station before we hazarded our own capital! But, by Jove! those sheep, at first, were enough to plague a man out of his wits. What with the wild dogs, just as

the sheep had been washed and ready to shear; then that cursed scabby sheep of Joe Timmes's, that we caught rubbing his sides so complacently against our unsuspecting poor ewes. I wonder we did not run away. But '*Patientia fit*'—what is that line in Horace? Never mind now. 'It is a long lane that has no turning' does just as well as anything in Horace, and Virgil to boot. I say, has not Vivian been here?"

PISISTRATUS.—"No; but he will be sure to come to-day."

GUY BOLDING.—"He has much the best berth of it. Horse-breeding and cattle-feeding; galloping after those wild devils; lost in a forest of horns; beasts lowing, scampering, goring, tearing off like mad buffaloes; horses galloping up hill, down hill, over rocks, stones, and timber; whips cracking, men shouting—your neck all but broken; a great bull making at you full rush. Such fun! Sheep are dull things to look at after a bull-hunt and a cattle-feast."

PISISTRATUS.—"Every man to his taste in the Bush. One may make one's money more easily and safely, with more adventure and sport, in the bucolic department. But one makes larger profit and quicker fortune, with good luck and good care, in the pastoral—and our object, I take it, is to get back to England as soon as we can."

GUY BOLDING.—"Humph! I should be content to live and die in the Bush—nothing like it, if women were not so scarce. To think of the redundant spinster population at home, and not a spinster here to be seen

within thirty miles, save Bet Goggins, indeed—and she has only one eye! But to return to Vivian—why should it be our object, more than his, to get back to England as soon as we can?"

PISISTRATUS.—"Not more, certainly. But you saw that an excitement more stirring than that we find in the sheep had become necessary to him. You know he was growing dull and dejected; the cattle station was to be sold a bargain. And then the Durham bulls, and the Yorkshire horses, which Mr Trevanion sent you and me out as presents were so tempting, I thought we might fairly add one speculation to another; and since one of us must superintend the bucolics, and two of us were required for the pastorals, I think Vivian was the best of us three to intrust with the first; and certainly it has succeeded as yet."

GUY.—"Why, yes, Vivian is quite in his element—always in action, and always in command. Let him be first in everything, and there is not a finer fellow, nor a better tempered—present company excepted. Hark! the dogs, the crack of the whip; there he is. And now, I suppose, we may go to dinner.

Enter VIVIAN.

His frame has grown more athletic; his eye, more steadfast and less restless, looks you full in the face. His smile is more open; but there is a melancholy in his expression, almost approaching to gloom. His dress is the same as that of Pisistratus and Guy—white vest and trousers; loose neckcloth, rather gay in colour;

broad cabbage-leaf hat; his moustache and beard are trimmed with more care than ours. He has a large whip in his hand, and a gun slung across his shoulders. Greetings are exchanged; mutual inquiries as to cattle and sheep, and the last horses despatched to the Indian market. Guy shows the *Lives of the Poets;* Vivian asks if it is possible to get the *Life of Clive*, or *Napoleon*, or a copy of *Plutarch*. Guy shakes his head—says, if a *Robinson Crusoe* will do as well, he has seen one in a very tattered state, but in too great request to be had a bargain.

The party turn into the hut. Miserable animals are bachelors in all countries; but most miserable in Bush-land. A man does not know what a helpmate of the soft sex is in the Old World, where women seem a matter of course. But in the Bush, a wife is literally bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh—your better half, your ministering angel, your Eve of the Eden—in short, all that poets have sung, or young orators say at public dinners, when called upon to give the toast of "The Ladies." Alas! we are three bachelors, but we are better off than bachelors often are in the Bush. For the wife of the shepherd I took from Cumberland does me and Bolding the honour to live in our hut, and make things tidy and comfortable. She has had a couple of children since we have been in the Bush; a wing has been added to the hut for that increase of family. The children, I dare say, one might have thought a sad nuisance in England; but I declare that, surrounded as one is by great bearded men, from sunrise to sunset, there is

something humanising, musical, and Christian-like in the very squall of the baby. There it goes—bless it! As for my other companions from Cumberland, Miles Square, the most aspiring of all, has long left me, and is superintendent to a great sheep-owner some two hundred miles off. The Will-o'-the Wisp is consigned to the cattle-station, where he is Vivian's head man, finding time now and then to indulge his old poaching propensities at the expense of parrots, black cockatoos, pigeons, and kangaroos. The shepherd remains with us, and does not seem, honest fellow, to care to better himself; he has a feeling of clanship, which keeps down the ambition common in Australia. And his wife—such a treasure! I assure you, the sight of her smooth, smiling woman's face, when we return home at night-fall, and the very flow of her gown, as she turns the "dampers" * in the ashes, and fills the teapot, have in them something holy and angelical. How lucky our Cumberland swain is not jealous! Not that there is any cause, enviable dog though he be; but where Desdemonas are so scarce, if you could but guess how green-eyed their Othellos generally are! Excellent husbands, it is true—none better; but you had better think twice before you attempt to play the Cassio in Bushland! There, however, she is, dear creature!—rattling among knives and forks, smoothing the table-cloth, setting on the salt-beef, and that rare luxury of pickles (the last pot in our store), and the produce of our garden and poultry-yard, which few Bushmen can

* A damper is a cake of flour baked without yeast, in the ashes.

boast of—and the dampers, and a pot of tea to each banqueter; no wine, beer, nor spirits—those are only for shearing-time. We have just said grace (a fashion retained from the holy mother-country), when, bless my soul! what a clatter without, what a tramping of feet, what a barking of dogs! Some guests have arrived. They are always welcome in Bushland! Perhaps a cattle-buyer in search of Vivian; perhaps that cursed squatter, whose sheep are always migrating to ours. Never mind, a hearty welcome to all—friend or foe. The door opens; one, two, three strangers. More plates and knives; draw your stools; just in time. First eat, then—what news?

Just as the strangers sit down, a voice is heard at the door—

"You will take particular care of this horse, young man: walk him about a little; wash his back with salt and water. Just unbuckle the saddle-bags; give them to me. Oh! safe enough, I daresay—but papers of consequence. The prosperity of the colony depends on these papers. What would become of you all if any accident happened to them, I shudder to think."

And here, attired in a twill shooting-jacket, budding with gilt buttons, impressed with a well-remembered device; a cabbage-leaf hat shading a face rarely seen in the Bush—a face smooth as razor could make it: neat, trim, respectable-looking as ever—his arm full of saddle-bags, and his nostrils gently distended, inhaling the steam of the banquet, walks in—Uncle Jack.

PISISTRATUS (leaping up).—"Is it possible? *You* in Australia—you in the Bush!"

Uncle Jack, not recognising Pisistratus in the tall, bearded man who is making a plunge at him, recedes in alarm, exclaiming—"Who are you?—never saw you before, sir! I suppose you'll say next that *I owe you something!*"

PISISTRATUS.—"Uncle Jack!"

UNCLE JACK (dropping his saddle-bags).—"Nephew!—Heaven be praised! Come to my arms!"

They embrace; mutual introductions to the company—Mr Vivian, Mr Bolding, on the one side—Major MacBlarney, Mr Bullion, Mr Emanuel Speck, on the other. Major MacBlarney is a fine portly man, with a slight Dublin brogue, who squeezes your hand as he would a sponge. Mr Bullion—reserved and haughty—wears green spectacles, and gives you a fore-finger. Mr Emanuel Speck—unusually smart for the Bush, with a blue satin stock, and one of those blouses common in Germany, with elaborate hems, and pockets enough for Briareus to have put all his hands into at once—is thin, civil, and stoops—bows, smiles, and sits down to dinner again, with the air of a man accustomed to attend to the main chance.

UNCLE JACK (his mouth full of beef).—"Famous beef! breed it yourself, eh? Slow work that cattle-feeding!—(Empties the rest of the pickle-jar into his plate.) "Must learn to go ahead in the New World—railway times these! We can put him up to a thing or two—

eh, Bullion?" (Whispering me)—"Great capitalist that Bullion! LOOK AT HIM!"

MR BULLION (gravely).—"A thing or two! If he has capital—you have said it, Mr Tibbets." (Looks round for the pickles—the green spectacles remain fixed upon Uncle Jack's plate.)

UNCLE JACK.—"All that this colony wants is a few men like us, with capital and spirit. Instead of paying paupers to emigrate, they should pay rich men to come—eh, Speck?"

While Uncle Jack turns to Mr Speck, Mr Bullion fixes his fork in a pickled onion in Jack's plate, and transfers it to his own—observing, not as incidentally to the onion, but to truth in general—"A man, gentlemen, in this country, has only to keep his eyes on the look-out, and seize on the first advantage!—resources are incalculable!"

Uncle Jack, returning to the plate and missing the onion, forestalls Mr Speck in seizing the last potato—observing also, and in the same philosophical and generalising spirit as Mr Bullion—"The great thing in this country is to be always beforehand: discovery and invention, promptitude and decision!—that's your go. 'Pon my life, one picks up sad vulgar sayings among the natives here!—'that's your go!' shocking! What would your poor father say? How is he—good Austin? Well?—that's right: and my dear sister? Ah, that damnable Peck!—still harping on the *Anti-Capitalist*, eh? But I'll make it up to you all now. Gentlemen, charge your glasses—a bumper-toast."

Mr Speck (in an affected tone).—"I respond to the sentiment in a flowing cup. Glasses are not forthcoming."

Uncle Jack.—"A bumper-toast to the health of the future millionaire, whom I present to you in my nephew and sole heir—Pisistratus Caxton, Esq. Yes, gentlemen, I here publicly announce to you that this gentleman will be the inheritor of all my wealth—freehold, leasehold, agricultural, and mineral; and when I am in the cold grave"—(takes out his pocket-handkerchief)—"and nothing remains of poor John Tibbets, look upon that gentleman and say, 'John Tibbets lives again!'"

Mr Speck (chantingly).—

"'Let the bumper-toast go round!'"

Guy Bolding.—"Hip, hip, hurrah!—three times three! What fun!"

Order is restored; dinner-things are cleared; each gentleman lights his pipe.

Vivian.—"What news from England?"

Mr Bullion.—"As to the funds, sir?"

Mr Speck.—"I suppose you mean, rather, as to the railways: great fortunes will be made there, sir; but still I think that our speculations here will——"

Vivian.—"I beg pardon for interrupting you, sir; but I thought, in the last papers, that there seemed something hostile in the temper of the French. No chance of a war?"

Major MacBlarney.—"Is it the war you'd be after, young gintleman? If me interest at the Horse Guards

can avail you, bedad! you'd make a proud man of Major MacBlarney."

Mr Bullion (authoritatively).—"No, sir, we won't have a war: the capitalists of Europe and Australia won't have it. The Rothschilds, and a few others that shall be nameless, have only got to do *this*, sir"—(Mr Bullion buttons up his pockets)—"and we'll do it too; and then what becomes of your war, sir?" (Mr Bullion snaps his pipe in the vehemence with which he brings his hand on the table, turns round the green spectacles, and takes up Mr Speck's pipe, which that gentleman had laid aside in an unguarded moment.)

Vivian.—"But the campaign in India?"

Major MacBlarney.—"Oh!—and if it's the Ingees you'd——"

Bullion (refilling Speck's pipe from Guy Bolding's exclusive tobacco-pouch, and interrupting the Major). —"India—that's another matter: I don't object to that! War there—rather good for the money-market than otherwise!"

Vivian.—"What news there, then?"

Mr Bullion.—"Don't know—haven't got India stock."

Mr Speck.—"Nor I either. The day for India is over: this is our India now." (Misses his tobacco-pipe; sees it in Bullion's mouth, and stares aghast! —N.B. The pipe is not a clay *dodeen*, but a small meerschaum—irreplaceable in Bushland.)

Pisistratus.—"Well, uncle, but I am at a loss to understand what new scheme you have in hand.

Something benevolent, I am sure—something for your fellow-creatures—for philanthropy and mankind ?"

Mr Bullion (starting).—"Why, young man, are you as green as all that ?"

Pisistratus.—"I, sir—no—Heaven forbid ! But my——" (Uncle Jack holds up his forefinger implor-ingly, and spills his tea over the pantaloons of his nephew !)

Pisistratus, wroth at the effect of the tea, and there-fore obdurate to the sign of the forefinger, continues rapidly, "But my uncle *is !*—some Grand National-Imperial-Colonial-Anti-Monopoly——"

Uncle Jack.—"Pooh ! pooh ! What a droll boy it is !"

Mr Bullion (solemnly).—"With these notions, which not even in jest should be fathered on my respectable and intelligent friend here"—(Uncle Jack bows)—"I am afraid you will never get on in the world, Mr Cax-ton. I don't think our speculations will suit *you !* It is growing late, gentlemen : we must push on."

Uncle Jack (jumping up).—"And I have so much to say to the dear boy. Excuse us : you know the feelings of an uncle !" (Takes my arm, and leads me out of the hut.)

Uncle Jack (as soon as we are in the air).—"You'll ruin us—you, me, and your father and mother. Yes ! What do you think I work and slave myself for but for you and yours ? Ruin us all, I say, if you talk in that way before Bullion ! His heart is as hard as the Bank of England's—and quite right he is, too. Fellow-creatures !

—stuff! I have renounced that delusion—the generous follies of my youth! I begin at last to live for myself —that is, for self and relatives! I shall succeed this time, you'll see!"

PISISTRATUS.—"Indeed, uncle, I hope so sincerely; and, to do you justice, there is always something very clever in your ideas—only they don't—"

UNCLE JACK (interrupting me with a groan).—"The fortunes that other men have gained by my ideas!—shocking to think of! What!—and shall I be reproached if I live no longer for such a set of thieving, greedy, ungrateful knaves? No, no! Number One shall be my maxim; and I'll make you a Crœsus, my boy—I will."

Pisistratus, after grateful acknowledgments for all prospective benefits, inquires how long Jack has been in Australia; what brought him into the colony; and what are his present views. Learns, to his astonishment, that Uncle Jack has been four years in the colony; that he sailed the year after Pisistratus—induced, he says, by that illustrious example, and by some mysterious agency or commission, which he will not explain, emanating either from the Colonial Office, or an Emigration Company. Uncle Jack has been thriving wonderfully since he abandoned his fellow-creatures. His first speculation, on arriving at the colony, was in buying some houses in Sydney, which (by those fluctuations in prices common to the extremes of the colonial mind—which is one while skip-

ping up the rainbow with Hope, and at another plunging into Acherontian abysses with Despair) he bought excessively cheap, and sold excessively dear. But his grand experiment has been in connection with the infant settlement of Adelaide, of which he considers himself one of the first founders; and as, in the rush of emigration which poured to that favoured establishment in the earlier years of its existence,—rolling on its tide all manner of credulous and inexperienced adventurers,—vast sums were lost, so, of those sums, certain fragments and pickings were easily griped and gathered up by a man of Uncle Jack's readiness and dexterity. Uncle Jack had contrived to procure excellent letters of introduction to the colonial grandees: he got into close connection with some of the principal parties seeking to establish a monopoly of land (which has since been in great measure effected, by raising the price, and excluding the small fry of petty capitalists); and effectually imposed on them, as a man with a vast knowledge of public business—in the confidence of great men at home—considerable influence with the English press, &c., &c. And no discredit to their discernment; for Jack, when he pleased, had a way with him that was almost irresistible. In this manner he contrived to associate himself and his earnings with men really of large capital, and long practical experience in the best mode by which that capital might be employed. He was thus admitted into a partnership (so far as his means went) with Mr Bullion, who was one of the largest sheep-owners and landholders in the

colony ; though, having many other nests to feather, that gentleman resided in state at Sydney, and left his runs and stations to the care of overseers and superintendents. But land-jobbing was Jack's special delight; and an ingenious German having lately declared that the neighbourhood of Adelaide betrayed the existence of those mineral treasures which have since been brought to day, Mr Tibbetts had persuaded Bullion and the other gentleman now accompanying him, to undertake the land journey from Sydney to Adelaide, privily and quietly, to ascertain the truth of the German's report, which was at present very little believed. If the ground failed of mines, Uncle Jack's account convinced his associates that mines quite as profitable might be found in the pockets of the raw adventurers, who were ready to buy one year at the dearest market, and driven to sell the next at the cheapest.

"But," concluded Uncle Jack, with a sly look, and giving me a poke in the ribs, "I've had to do with mines before now, and know what they are. I'll let nobody but you into my pet scheme ; you shall go shares if you like. The scheme is as plain as a problem in Euclid,—if the German is right, and there are mines, why, the mines will be worked. Then miners must be employed ; but miners must eat, drink, and spend their money. The thing is to get *that* money. Do you take ?"

Pisistratus.—"Not at all !"

Uncle Jack (majestically).—"A Great Grog and Store Depôt ! The miners want grog and stores, come

to your depôt; you take their money; Q.E.D.! Shares —eh, you dog? Cribs, as we said at school. Put in a paltry thousand or two, and you shall go halves."

Pisistratus (vehemently).—"Not for all the mines of Potosi."

Uncle Jack (good-humouredly).—"Well, it shan't be the worse for you. I shan't alter my will, in spite of your want of confidence. Your young friend—that Mr Vivian, I think you call him—intelligent-looking fellow, sharper than the other, I guess,—would *he* like a share?"

Pisistratus.—"In the grog depôt? You had better ask him!"

Uncle Jack.—"What! you pretend to be aristocratic in the Bush! Too good. Ha, ha—they're calling to me—we must be off."

Pisistratus.—"I will ride with you a few miles. What say you, Vivian? and you, Guy?"——

As the whole party now joined us.

Guy prefers basking in the sun, and reading the *Lives of the Poets*. Vivian assents; we accompany the party till sunset. Major MacBlarney prodigalises his offers of service in every conceivable department of life, and winds up with an assurance that, if we want anything in those departments connected with engineering —such as mining, mapping, surveying, &c.—he will serve us, bedad, for nothing, or next to it. We suspect Major MacBlarney to be a civil engineer, suffering under the innocent hallucination that he has been in the army.

Mr Speck lets out to me, in a confidential whisper, that Mr Bullion is monstrous rich, and has made his fortune from small beginnings, by never letting a good thing go. I think of Uncle Jack's pickled onion, and Mr Speck's meerschaum, and perceive, with respectful admiration, that Mr Bullion acts uniformly on one grand system. Ten minutes afterwards, Mr Bullion observes, in a tone equally confidential, that Mr Speck, though so smiling and civil, is as sharp as a needle; and that if I want any shares in the new speculation, or indeed in any other, I had better come at once to Bullion, who would not deceive me for my weight in gold. "Not," added Bullion, "that I have anything to say against Speck. He is well enough to do in the world—a warm man, sir; and when a man is really warm, I am the last person to think of his little faults, and turn on him the cold shoulder."

"Adieu!" said Uncle Jack, pulling out once more his pocket-handkerchief; "my love to all at home." And sinking his voice into a whisper, "If ever you think better of the grog and store depôt, nephew, you'll find an uncle's heart in this bosom!"

CHAPTER II.

It was night as Vivian and myself rode slowly home. Night in Australia! How impossible to describe its beauty! Heaven seems, in that new world, so much nearer to earth! Every star stands out so bright and particular, as if fresh from the time when the Maker willed it. And the moon like a large silvery sun;—the least object on which it shines so distinct and so still.* Now and then a sound breaks the silence, but a sound so much in harmony with the solitude that it only deepens its charms. Hark! the low cry of a night-bird, from yonder glen amidst the small grey gleaming rocks. Hark! as night deepens, the bark of the distant watch-dog, or the low strange howl of his more savage species, from which he defends the fold. Hark! the echo catches the sound, and flings it sportively from hill to hill—farther, and farther, and farther down, till all again is hushed, and the flowers hang noiseless over your head, as you ride through a grove

* "I have frequently," says Mr Wilkinson, in his invaluable work upon South Australia, at once so graphic and so practical, "been out on a journey in such a night, and whilst allowing the horse his own time to walk along the road, have solaced myself by reading in the still moonlight."

of the giant gum-trees. Now the air is literally charged with the odours, and the sense of fragrance grows almost painful in its pleasure. You quicken your pace, and escape again into the open plains and the full moonlight, and through the slender tea-trees catch the gleam of the river, and in the exquisite fineness of the atmosphere hear the soothing sound of its murmur.

PISISTRATUS.—"And this land has become the heritage of our people! Methinks I see, as I gaze around, the scheme of the All-beneficent Father disentangling itself clear through the troubled history of mankind. How mysteriously, while Europe rears its populations and fulfils its civilising mission, these realms have been concealed from its eyes—divulged to us just as civilisation needs the solution to its problems; a vent for feverish energies, baffled in the crowd; offering bread to the famished, hope to the desperate; in very truth enabling the 'New World to redress the balance of the Old.' Here, what a Latium for the wandering spirits,

> 'On various seas by various tempests toss'd.'

Here, the actual Æneid passes before our eyes. From the huts of the exiles scattered over this hardier Italy, who cannot see in the future,

> 'A race from whence new Alban sires shall come,
> And the long glories of a future Rome.'"

VIVIAN (mournfully).—"Is it from the outcasts of the workhouse, the prison, and the transport-ship, that a second Rome is to arise?"

PISISTRATUS.—"There is something in this new soil

—in the labour it calls forth, in the hope it inspires, in the sense of property, which I take to be the core of social morals—that expedites the work of redemption with marvellous rapidity. Take them altogether, whatever their origin, or whatever brought them hither, they are a fine, manly, frank-hearted race, these colonists now !—rude, not mean, especially in the Bush, and, I suspect, will ultimately become as gallant and honest a population as that now springing up in South Australia, from which convicts are excluded—and happily excluded —for the distinction will sharpen emulation. As to the rest, and in direct answer to your question, I fancy even the emancipist part of our population every whit as respectable as the mongrel robbers under Romulus."

VIVIAN.—"But were *they* not soldiers?—I mean the first Romans?"

PISISTRATUS.—"My dear cousin, we are in advance of those grim outcasts, if we can get lands, houses, and wives (though the last is difficult, and it is well that we have no white Sabines in the neighbourhood), without that same soldiering which was the necessity of their existence."

VIVIAN (after a pause).—"I have written to my father, and to yours more fully—stating in the one letter my wish, in the other trying to explain the feeling from which it springs."

PISISTRATUS.—"Are the letters gone?"

VIVIAN.—"Yes."

PISISTRATUS.—"And you would not show them to me!"

VIVIAN.—"Do not speak so reproachfully. I promised

your father to pour out my whole heart to him, whenever it was troubled and at strife. I promise you now that I will go by his advice."

PISISTRATUS (disconsolately).—"What is there in this military life for which you yearn that can yield you more food for healthful excitement and stirring adventure than your present pursuits afford!"

VIVIAN.—"Distinction! You do not see the difference between us. You have but a fortune to make, I have a name to redeem; you look calmly on to the future; I have a dark blot to erase from the past."

PISISTRATUS (soothingly).—"It is erased. Five years of no weak bewailings, but of manly reform, steadfast industry, conduct so blameless that even Guy (whom I look upon as the incarnation of blunt English honesty) half doubts whether you are '*cute* enough for 'a station'—a character already so high that I long for the hour when you will again take your father's spotless name, and give me the pride to own our kinship to the world,—all this surely redeems the errors arising from an uneducated childhood and a wandering youth."

VIVIAN (leaning over his horse, and putting his hand on my shoulder).—"My dear friend, what do I owe you!" Then recovering his emotion, and pushing on at a quicker pace, while he continues to speak: "But can you not see that, just in proportion as my comprehension of right would become clear and strong, so my conscience would become also more sensitive and reproachful; and the better I understand my gallant father, the more I must desire to be as he would have

had his son. Do you think it would content him, could he see me branding cattle, and bargaining with bullock-drivers?—Was it not the strongest wish of his heart that I should adopt his own career? Have I not heard you say that he would have had you too a soldier, but for your mother? I have no mother! If I made thousands, and tens of thousands, by this ignoble calling, would they give my father half the pleasure that he would feel at seeing my name honourably mentioned in a despatch? No, no! You have banished the gypsy blood, and now the soldier's breaks out! Oh for one glorious day in which I may clear my way into fair repute, as our fathers before us!—when tears of proud joy may flow from those eyes that have wept such hot drops at my shame—when *she*, too, in her high station beside that sleek lord, may say, 'His heart was not so vile, after all!' Don't argue with me—it is in vain! Pray, rather, that I may have leave to work out my own way; for I tell you that, if condemned to stay here, I may not murmur aloud—I may go through this round of low duties as the brute turns the wheel of a mill! but my heart will prey on itself, and you shall soon write on my gravestone the epitaph of the poor poet you told us of, whose true disease was the thirst of glory—'Here lies one whose name was written in water.'"

I had no answer; that contagious ambition made my own veins run more warmly, and my own heart beat with a louder tumult. Amidst the pastoral scenes, and under the tranquil moonlight of the New, the Old

World, even in me, rude Bushman, claimed for a while its son. But as we rode on, the air, so inexpressibly buoyant, yet soothing as an anodyne, restored me to peaceful Nature. Now the flocks, in their snowy clusters, were seen sleeping under the stars; hark! the welcome of the watch-dogs; see the light gleaming far from the chink of the door! And, pausing, I said aloud, "No, there is more glory in laying these rough foundations of a mighty state, though no trumpets resound with your victory — though no laurels shall shadow your tomb—than in forcing the onward progress of your race over burning cities and hecatombs of men!" I looked round for Vivian's answer; but, ere I spoke, he had spurred from my side, and I saw the wild dogs slinking back from the hoofs of his horse, as he rode at speed, on the sward, through the moonlight.

CHAPTER III.

The weeks and the months rolled on, and the replies to Vivian's letters came at last; I foreboded too well their purport. I knew that my father could not set himself in opposition to the deliberate and cherished desire of a man who had now arrived at the full strength of his understanding, and must be left at liberty to make his own election of the paths of life. Long after that date, I saw Vivian's letter to my father; and even his conversation had scarcely prepared me for the pathos of that confession of a mind remarkable alike for its strength and its weakness. If born in the age, or submitted to the influences, of religious enthusiasm, here was a nature that, awaking from sin, could not have been contented with the sober duties of mediocre goodness — that would have plunged into the fiery depths of monkish fanaticism—wrestled with the fiend in the hermitage, or marched barefoot on the infidel with a sackcloth for armour—the cross for a sword. Now, the impatient desire for redemption took a more mundane direction, but with something that seemed almost spiritual in its fervour. And this enthusiasm flowed through strata of such profound mel-

ancholy! Deny it a vent, and it might sicken into lethargy, or fret itself into madness—give it the vent, and it might vivify and fertilise as it swept along.

My father's reply to this letter was what might be expected. It gently reinforced the old lessons in the distinctions between aspirations towards the perfecting ourselves—aspirations that are never in vain—and the morbid passion for applause from others, which shifts conscience from our own bosoms to the confused Babel of the crowd, and calls it "fame." But my father, in his counsels, did not seek to oppose a mind so obstinately bent upon a single course—he sought rather to guide and strengthen it in the way it should go. The seas of human life are wide. Wisdom may suggest the voyage, but it must first look to the condition of the ship, and the nature of the merchandise to exchange. Not every vessel that sails from Tarshish can bring back the gold of Ophir; but shall it therefore rot in the harbour? No; give its sails to the wind!

But I had expected that Roland's letter to his son would have been full of joy and exultation—joy there was none in it, yet exultation there might be, though serious, grave, and subdued. In the proud assent that the old soldier gave to his son's wish, in his entire comprehension of motives so akin to his own nature, there was yet a visible sorrow; it seemed even as if he constrained himself to the assent he gave. Not till I had read it again and again could I divine Roland's feelings while he wrote. At this distance of time, I comprehend them well. Had he sent from his side,

into noble warfare, some boy fresh to life, new to sin, with an enthusiasm pure and single-hearted as his own young chivalrous ardour, then, with all a soldier's joy, he had yielded a cheerful tribute to the hosts of England; but here he recognised, though perhaps dimly, not the frank military fervour, but the stern desire of expiation, and in that thought he admitted forebodings that would have been otherwise rejected; so that, at the close of the letter, it seemed not the fiery war-seasoned Roland that wrote, but rather some timid, anxious mother. Warnings and entreaties and cautions not to be rash, and assurances that the best soldiers were ever the most prudent; were these the counsels of the fierce veteran, who, at the head of the forlorn hope, had mounted the wall at ——, his sword between his teeth!

But, whatever his presentiments, Roland had yielded at once to his son's prayer—hastened to London at the receipt of his letter—obtained a commission in a regiment now in active service in India; and that commission was made out in his son's name. The commission, with an order to join the regiment as soon as possible, accompanied the letter.

And Vivian, pointing to the name addressed to him, said, "Now, indeed, I may resume this name, and, next to Heaven, will I hold it sacred! It shall guide me to glory in life, or my father shall read it, without shame, on my tomb!" I see him before me, as he stood then —his form erect, his dark eyes solemn in their light, a serenity in his smile, a grandeur on his brow, that I

had never marked till then! Was that the same man I had recoiled from as the sneering cynic, shuddered at as the audacious traitor, or wept over as the cowering outcast? How little the nobleness of aspect depends on symmetry of feature, or the mere proportions of form! What dignity robes the man who is filled with a lofty thought!

CHAPTER IV.

He is gone! he has left a void in my existence. I had grown to love him so well; I had been so proud when men praised him. My love was a sort of self-love—I had looked upon him in part as the work of my own hands. I am a long time ere I can settle back, with good heart, to my pastoral life. Before my cousin went, we cast up our gains and settled our shares. When he resigned the allowance which Roland had made him, his father secretly gave to me, for his use, a sum equal to that which I and Guy Bolding brought into the common stock. Roland had raised the sum upon mortgage; and, while the interest was a trivial deduction from his income, compared to the former allowance, the capital was much more useful to his son than a mere yearly payment could have been. Thus, between us, we had a considerable sum for Australian settlers—£4500. For the first two years we made nothing; indeed, great part of the first year was spent in learning our art at the station of an old settler. But at the end of the third year, our flocks having then become very considerable, we cleared a return beyond my most sanguine expectations. And

when my cousin left, just in the sixth year of exile, our shares amounted to £4000 each, exclusive of the value of the two stations. My cousin had, at first, wished that I should forward his share to his father, but he soon saw that Roland would never take it; and it was finally agreed that it should rest in my hands, for me to manage for him, send him out an interest at five per cent, and devote the surplus profits to the increase of his capital. I had now, therefore, the control of £12,000, and we might consider ourselves very respectable capitalists. I kept on the cattle station, by the aid of the Will-o'-the-Wisp, for about two years after Vivian's departure (we had then had it altogether for five). At the end of that time, I sold it and the stock to great advantage. And the sheep—for the "brand" of which I had a high reputation—having wonderfully prospered in the meanwhile, I thought we might safely extend our speculations into new ventures. Glad, too, of a change of scene, I left Bolding in charge of the flocks, and bent my course to Adelaide, for the fame of that new settlement had already disturbed the peace of the Bush. I found Uncle Jack residing near Adelaide, in a very handsome villa, with all the signs and appurtenances of colonial opulence; and report, perhaps, did not exaggerate the gains he had made:—so many strings to his bow—and each arrow, this time, seemed to have gone straight to the white of the butts. I now thought I had acquired knowledge and caution sufficient to avail myself of

Uncle Jack's ideas, without ruining myself by following them out in his company; and I saw a kind of retributive justice in making his brain minister to the fortunes which his ideality and constructiveness, according to Squills, had served so notably to impoverish. I must here gratefully acknowledge that I owed much to this irregular genius. The investigation of the supposed mines had proved unsatisfactory to Mr Bullion; and they were not fairly discovered till a few years after. But Jack had convinced himself of their existence, and purchased, on his own account, "for an old song," some barren land, which he was persuaded would prove to him a Golconda, one day or other, under the euphonious title (which, indeed, it ultimately established) of the "Tibbets' Wheal." The suspension of the mines, however, fortunately suspended the existence of the Grog and Store Depôt, and Uncle Jack was now assisting in the foundation of Port Philip. Profiting by his advice, I adventured in that new settlement some timid and wary purchases, which I resold to considerable advantage. Meanwhile, I must not omit to state briefly what, since my departure from England, had been the ministerial career of Trevanion.

That refining fastidiousness,—that scrupulosity of political conscience, which had characterised him as an independent member, and often served, in the opinion both of friend and of foe, to give the attribute of *general* impracticability to a mind that, in all *details*, was so essentially and laboriously practical—might perhaps have founded Trevanion's reputation as a minister,

if he could have been a minister without colleagues—if, standing alone, and from the necessary height, he could have placed, clear and single, before the world, his exquisite honesty of purpose, and the width of a statesmanship marvellously accomplished and comprehensive. But Trevanion could not amalgamate with others, nor subscribe to the discipline of a cabinet in which he was not the chief, especially in a policy which must have been thoroughly abhorrent to such a nature—a policy that, of late years, has distinguished not one faction alone, but has seemed so forced upon the more eminent political leaders, on either side, that they who take the more charitable view of things may, perhaps, hold it to arise from the necessity of the age, fostered by the temper of the public—I mean the policy of *Expediency*. Certainly not in this book will I introduce the angry elements of party politics; and how should I know much about them? All that I have to say is, that, right or wrong, such a policy must have been at war, every moment, with each principle of Trevanion's statesmanship, and fretted each fibre of his moral constitution. The aristocratic combinations which his alliance with the Castleton interest had brought to his aid, served perhaps to fortify his position in the cabinet; yet aristocratic combinations were of small avail against what seemed the atmospherical epidemic of the age. I could see how his situation had preyed on his mind, when I read a paragraph in the newspapers, "that it was reported, on good authority, that Mr Trevanion had tendered his resignation,

but had been prevailed upon to withdraw it, as his retirement at that moment would break up the government." Some months afterwards came another paragraph, to the effect, "that Mr Trevanion was taken suddenly ill, and that it was feared his illness was of a nature to preclude his resuming his official labours." Then parliament broke up. Before it met again, Mr Trevanion was gazetted as Earl of Ulverstone—a title that had been once in his family—and had left the administration, unable to encounter the fatigues of office. To an ordinary man, the elevation to an earldom, passing over the lesser honours in the peerage, would have seemed no mean close to a political career; but I felt what profound despair of striving against circumstances for utility—what entanglements with his colleagues, whom he could neither conscientiously support, nor, according to his high old-fashioned notions of party honour and etiquette, energetically oppose—had driven him to abandon that stormy scene in which his existence had been passed. The House of Lords, to that active intellect, was as the retirement of some warrior of old into the cloisters of a convent. The gazette that chronicled the earldom of Ulverstone was the proclamation that Albert Trevanion lived no more for the world of public men. And, indeed, from that date his career vanished out of sight. Trevanion died—the Earl of Ulverstone made no sign.

I had hitherto written but twice to Lady Ellinor during my exile—once upon the marriage of Fanny with Lord Castleton, which took place about six

months after I sailed from England, and again, when thanking her husband for some rare animals, equine, pastoral, and bovine, which he had sent as presents to Bolding and myself. I wrote again after Trevanion's elevation to the peerage, and received, in due time, a reply, confirming all my impressions—for it was full of bitterness and gall, accusations of the world, fears for the country: Richelieu himself could not have taken a gloomier view of things, when his levees were deserted, and his power seemed annihilated before the "Day of Dupes." Only one gleam of comfort appeared to visit Lady Ulverstone's breast, and thence to settle prospectively over the future of the world—a second son had been born to Lord Castleton; to that son would descend the estates of Ulverstone, and the representation of that line distinguished by Trevanion, and enriched by Trevanion's wife. Never was there a child of such promise! Not Virgil himself, when he called on the Sicilian Muses to celebrate the advent of a son to Pollio, ever sounded a loftier strain. Here was one, now, perchance, engaged on words of two syllables, called—

> "By labouring nature to sustain
> The nodding frame of heaven, and earth, and main,
> See to their base restored, earth, sea, and air,
> And joyful ages from behind in crowding ranks appear!"

Happy dream which Heaven sends to grand-parents! re-baptism of Hope in the font whose drops sprinkle the grandchild!

Time flies on; affairs continue to prosper. I am

just leaving the bank at Adelaide with a satisfied air, when I am stopped in the street by bowing acquaintances, who never shook me by the hand before. They shake me by the hand now, and cry—"I wish you joy, sir. That brave fellow, your namesake, is of course your near relation."

"What do you mean?"

"Have not you seen the papers? Here they are."

"Gallant conduct of Ensign de Caxton—promoted to a lieutenancy on the field."—I wipe my eyes, and cry—"Thank Heaven—it is my cousin!" Then new hand-shakings, new groups gather round. I feel taller by the head than I was before! We, grumbling English, always quarrelling with each other—the world not wide enough to hold us; and yet, when in the far land some bold deed is done by a countryman, how we feel that we are brothers! how our hearts warm to each other! What a letter I wrote home! and how joyously I went back to the Bush! The Will-o'-the-Wisp has attained to a cattle-station of his own. I go fifty miles out of my way to tell him the news and give him the newspaper; for he knows now that his old master, Vivian, is a Cumberland man—a Caxton. Poor Will-o'-the-Wisp! The tea that night tasted uncommonly like whisky-punch! Father Mathew forgive us—but if you had been a Cumberland man, and heard the Will-o'-the-Wisp roaring out, "Blue Bonnets over the Borders," I think your tea, too, would not have come out of the caddy!

CHAPTER V.

A GREAT change has occurred in our household. Guy's father is dead—his latter years cheered by the accounts of his son's steadiness and prosperity, and by the touching proofs thereof which Guy has exhibited. For he insisted on repaying to his father the old college debts, and the advance of the £1500, begging that the money might go towards his sister's portion. Now, after the old gentleman's death, the sister resolved to come out and live with her dear brother Guy. Another wing is built to the hut. Ambitious plans for a new stone house, to be commenced the following year, are entertained; and Guy has brought back from Adelaide not only a sister, but, to my utter astonishment, a wife, in the shape of a fair friend by whom the sister is accompanied.

The young lady did quite right to come to Australia if she wanted to be married. She was very pretty, and all the beaux in Adelaide were round her in a moment. Guy was in love the first day—in a rage with thirty rivals the next—in despair the third—put the question the fourth—and before the fifteenth was a married man, hastening back with a treasure, of

which he fancied all the world was conspiring to rob him. His sister was quite as pretty as her friend, and she, too, had offers enough the moment she landed —only she was romantic and fastidious, and I fancy Guy told her that "I was just made for her."

However, charming though she be—with pretty blue eyes, and her brother's frank smile—I am not enchanted. I fancy she lost all chance of my heart by stepping across the yard in a pair of silk shoes. If I were to live in the Bush, give me a wife as a companion who can ride well, leap over a ditch, walk beside me when I go forth gun in hand, for a shot at the kangaroos. But I dare not go on with the list of a Bush husband's requisites. This change, however, serves for various reasons, to quicken my desire of return. Ten years have now elapsed, and I have already obtained a much larger fortune than I had calculated to make. Sorely to Guy's honest grief, I therefore wound up our affairs, and dissolved partnership: for he had decided to pass his life in the colony—and with his pretty wife, who has grown very fond of him, I don't wonder at it. Guy takes my share of the station and stock off my hands; and, all accounts square between us, I bid farewell to the Bush. Despite all the motives that drew my heart homeward, it was not without participation in the sorrow of my old companions, that I took leave of those I might never see again on this side the grave. The meanest man in my employ had grown a friend; and when those hard hands grasped mine, and from many a breast that once had waged fierce war with the world, came

the soft blessing to the Homeward-bound—with a tender thought for the Old England, that had been but a harsh stepmother to them—I felt a choking sensation, which I suspect is little known to the friendships of May-fair and St James's. I was forced to get off with a few broken words, when I had meant to part with a long speech: perhaps the broken words pleased the audience better. Spurring away, I gained a little eminence and looked back. There were the poor faithful fellows gathered in a ring watching me—their hats off, their hands shading their eyes from the sun. And Guy had thrown himself on the ground, and I heard his loud sobs distinctly. His wife was leaning over his shoulder, trying to soothe. Forgive him, fair helpmate, you will be all in the world to him—to-morrow! And the blue-eyed sister, where was she? Had she no tears for the rough friend who laughed at the silk shoes, and taught her how to hold the reins, and never fear that the old pony would run away with her? What matter?—if the tears were shed, they were hidden tears. No shame in them, fair Ellen?—since then, thou hast wept happy tears over thy first-born—those tears have long ago washed away all bitterness in the innocent memories of a girl's first fancy.

CHAPTER VI.

DATED FROM ADELAIDE.

IMAGINE my wonder—Uncle Jack has just been with me, and—but hear the dialogue—

UNCLE JACK.—"So you are positively going back to that smoky, fusty, old England, just when you are on your high-road to a plum. A plum, sir, at least! They all say there is not a more rising young man in the colony. I think Bullion would take you into partnership. What are you in such a hurry for?"

PISISTRATUS.—"To see my father and mother, and Uncle Roland, and"——(was about to name some one else, but stops). "You see, my dear uncle, I came out solely with the idea of repairing my father's losses in that unfortunate speculation of *The Capitalist*."

UNCLE JACK (coughs and ejaculates).—"That villain Peck!"

PISISTRATUS.—"And to have a few thousands to invest in poor Roland's acres. The object is achieved: why should I stay?"

UNCLE JACK.—"A few paltry thousands, when in twenty years more, at the farthest, you would wallow in gold!"

PISISTRATUS.—"A man learns in the Bush how happy life can be with plenty of employment and very little money. I shall practise that lesson in England."

UNCLE JACK.—"Your mind's made up?"

PISISTRATUS.—"And my place in the ship taken."

UNCLE JACK.—"Then there's no more to be said." (Hums, haws, and examines his nails—filbert nails, not a speck on them. Then suddenly, and jerking up his head)—"That *Capitalist!* it has been on my conscience, nephew, ever since; and, somehow or other, since I have abandoned the cause of my fellow-creatures, I think I have cared more for my relations."

PISISTRATUS (smiling as he remembers his father's shrewd predictions thereon).—"Naturally, my dear uncle: any child who has thrown a stone into a pond knows that a circle disappears as it widens."

UNCLE JACK.—"Very true—I shall make a note of that, applicable to my next speech, in defence of what they call the 'land monopoly.' Thank you—stone—circle!" (Jots down notes in his pocket-book). "But, to return to the point: I am well off now—I have neither wife nor child; and I feel that I ought to bear my share in your father's loss: it was our joint speculation. And your father, good, dear Austin! paid my debts into the bargain. And how cheering the punch was that night, when your mother wanted to scold poor Jack! And the £300 Austin lent me when I left him: nephew, that was the re-making of me—the acorn of the oak I have planted. So here they are" (added Uncle Jack, with a heroical effort—and he ex-

tracted from the pocket-book bills for a sum between three and four thousand pounds). "There, it is done; and I shall sleep better for it!" (With that Uncle Jack got up, and bolted out of the room.)

Ought I to take the money? Why, I think yes!—it is but fair. Jack must be really rich, and can well spare the money; besides, if he wants it again, I know my father will let him have it. And, indeed, Jack caused the loss of the whole sum lost on *The Capitalist*, &c.: and this is not quite the half of what my father paid away. But is it not fine in Uncle Jack! Well, my father was quite right in his milder estimate of Jack's scalene conformation, and it is hard to judge of a man when he is needy and down in the world. When one grafts one's ideas on one's neighbour's money, they are certainly not so grand as when they spring from one's own.

Uncle Jack (popping his head into the room).—"And, you see, you can double that money if you will just leave it in my hands for a couple of years—you have no notion what I shall make of the Tibbets' Wheal! Did I tell you?—the German was quite right—I have been offered already seven times the sum which I gave for the land. But I am now looking out for a company: let me put you down for shares to the amount at least of those trumpery bills. Cent per cent—I guarantee cent per cent!" (And Uncle Jack stretches out those famous smooth hands of his, with a tremulous motion of the ten eloquent fingers).

Pisistratus.—"Ah! my dear uncle, if you repent"—

UNCLE JACK.—"Repent! when I offer you cent per cent, on my personal guarantee!"

PISISTRATUS (carefully putting the bills into his breast coat pocket).—"Then, if you don't repent, my dear uncle, allow me to shake you by the hand, and say that I will not consent to lessen my esteem and admiration for the high principle which prompts this restitution, by confounding it with trading associations of loans, interests, and copper-mines. And, you see, since this sum is paid to my father, I have no right to invest it without his permission."

UNCLE JACK (with emotion).—"'Esteem, admiration, high principle!'—these are pleasant words from you, nephew." (Then, shaking his head, and smiling)—"You sly dog! you are quite right: get the bills cashed at once. And hark ye, sir, just keep out of my way, will you? and don't let me coax from you a farthing." (Uncle Jack slams the door and rushes out. Pisistratus draws the bills warily from his pocket, half-suspecting they must already have turned into withered leaves, like fairy money; slowly convinces himself that the bills are good bills; and, by lively gestures, testifies his delight and astonishment.) *Scene changes.*

PART EIGHTEENTH.

CHAPTER I.

Adieu, thou beautiful land! Canaan of the exiles, and Ararat to many a shattered Ark! Fair cradle of a race for whom the unbounded heritage of a future, that no sage can conjecture, no prophet divine, lies afar in the golden promise-light of Time!—destined, perchance, from the sins and sorrows of a civilisation struggling with its own elements of decay, to renew the youth of the world, and transmit the great soul of England through the cycles of Infinite Change. All climates that can best ripen the products of earth, or form into various character and temper the different families of man, "rain influences" from the heaven, that smiles so benignly on those who had once shrunk, ragged, from the wind, or scowled on the thankless sun. Here, the hardy air of the chill Mother Isle, there the mild warmth of Italian autumns, or the breathless glow of the tropics. And with the beams of every climate, glides subtle Hope. Of her there, it

may be said, as of Light itself, in those exquisite lines of a neglected poet—

> "Through the soft ways of heaven, and air, and sea,
> Which open all their pores to thee;
> Like a clear river thou dost glide—
> . . . . . .
> All the world's bravery that delights our eyes,
> Is but thy several liveries;
> Thou the rich dye on them bestowest;
> The nimble pencil paints the landscape as thou goest." *

Adieu, my kind nurse and sweet foster-mother!—a long and a last adieu! Never had I left thee but for that louder voice of Nature which calls the child to the parent, and woos us from the labours we love the best by the chime in the Sabbath-bells of Home.

No one can tell how dear the memory of that wild Bush life becomes to him who has tried it with a *fitting spirit*. How often it haunts him in the commonplace of more civilised scenes! Its dangers, its risks, its sense of animal health, its bursts of adventure, its intervals of careless repose: the fierce gallop through a very sea of wide rolling plains—the still saunter, at night, through woods never changing their leaves; with the moon, clear as sunshine, stealing slant through their clusters of flowers. With what an effort we reconcile ourselves to the trite cares and vexed pleasures, "the quotidian ague of frigid impertinences," to which we return! How strong and black stands my pencil-mark in this passage of the poet from whom I have just quoted before!—

* Cowley's *Ode to Light*.

"We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature—we are there among the pitiful shifts of policy; we walk here, in the light and open ways of the Divine Bounty—we grope there, in the dark and confused labyrinth of human malice." *

But I weary you, reader. The New World vanishes —now a line—now a speck; let us turn away, with the face to the Old.

Amongst my fellow-passengers, how many there are returning home disgusted, disappointed, impoverished, ruined, throwing themselves again on those unsuspecting poor friends, who thought they had done with the luckless good-for-naughts for ever. For, don't let me deceive thee, reader, into supposing that every adventurer to Australia has the luck of Pisistratus. Indeed, though the poor labourer, and especially the poor operative from London and the great trading towns (who has generally more of the quick knack of learning—the *adaptable faculty*—required in a new colony, than the simple agricultural labourer), are pretty sure to succeed, the class to which I belong is one in which failures are numerous, and success the exception—I mean young men with scholastic education and the habits of gentlemen—with small capital and sanguine hopes. But this, in ninety-nine times out of a hundred, is not the fault of the colony, but of the emigrants. It requires, not so much intellect as a peculiar turn of intellect, and a fortunate combination of physi-

* COWLEY on *Town and Country.* (Discourse on Agriculture.)

cal qualities, easy temper, and quick mother-wit, to make a small capitalist a prosperous Bushman.* And if you could see the sharks that swim round a man just dropped at Adelaide or Sydney, with one or two thousand pounds in his pocket! Hurry out of the towns as fast as you can, my young emigrant; turn a deaf ear, for the present at least, to all jobbers and speculators; make friends with some practised old Bushman; spend several months at his station before you hazard your capital; take with you a temper to bear everything and sigh for nothing; put your whole heart in what you are about; never call upon Hercules when your cart sticks in the rut, and, whether you feed sheep or breed cattle, your success is but a question of time.

But, whatever I owed to nature, I owed also something to fortune. I bought my sheep at little more than 7s. each. When I left, none were worth less

* How true are the following remarks:—

"Action is the first great requisite of a colonist (that is, a pastoral or agricultural settler). With a young man, the tone of his mind is more important than his previous pursuits. I have known men of an active, energetic, contented disposition, with a good flow of animal spirits, who had been bred in luxury and refinement, succeed better than men bred as farmers, who were always hankering after bread and beer, and market ordinaries of Old England. . . . To be dreaming when you should be looking after your cattle is a terrible drawback. . . . There are certain persons who, too lazy and too extravagant to succeed in Europe, sail for Australia under the idea that fortunes are to be made there by a sort of legerdemain, spend or lose their capital in a very short space of time, and return to England to abuse the place, the people, and everything connected with colonisation."—*Sidney's Australian Handbook*—admirable for its wisdom and compactness.

than 15s., and the fat sheep were worth £1.* I had an excellent shepherd, and my whole care, night and day, was the improvement of the flock. I was fortunate, too, in entering Australia before the system miscalled "The Wakefield" † had diminished the supply of labour, and raised the price of land. When the change came (like most of those with large allotments and surplus capital), it greatly increased the value of

* Lest this seem an exaggeration, I venture to annex an extract from a MS. letter to the author from Mr George Blakeston Wilkinson, author of *South Australia*.

"I will instance the case of one person, who had been a farmer in England, and emigrated with about £2000 about seven years since. On his arrival, he found that the price of sheep had fallen from about 30s. to 5s. or 6s. per head, and he bought some well-bred flocks at these prices. He was fortunate in obtaining a good and extensive *run*, and he devoted the whole of his time to improving his flocks, and encouraged his shepherds by rewards; so that, in about four years, his original number of sheep had increased from 2500 (which cost him £700) to 7000; and the breed and wool were also so much improved, that he could obtain £1 per head for 2000 fat sheep, and 15s. per head for the other 5000, and this at a time when the general price of sheep was from 10s. to 16s. This alone increased his original capital, invested in sheep, from £700 to £5700. The profits from the wool paid the whole of his expenses and wages for his men."

† I felt sure from the first, that the system called "The Wakefield" could never fairly represent the ideas of Mr Wakefield himself, whose singular breadth of understanding, and various knowledge of mankind, belied the notion that fathered on him the clumsy execution of a theory wholly inapplicable to a social state like Australia. I am glad to see that he has vindicated himself from the discreditable paternity. But I grieve to find that he still clings to one cardinal error of the system, in the discouragement of small holdings, and that he evades, more ingeniously than ingenuously, the important question—"What should be the minimum price of land?"

my own property, though at the cost of a terrible blow on the general interests of the colony. I was lucky, too, in the additional venture of a cattle-station, and in the breed of horses and herds, which, in the five years devoted to that branch establishment, trebled the sum invested therein, exclusive of the advantageous sale of the station.* I was lucky, also, as I have stated, in the purchase and resale of lands, at Uncle Jack's recommendation. And, lastly, I left in time, and escaped a very disastrous crisis in colonial affairs, which I take the liberty of attributing entirely to the mischievous crotchets of theorists at home, who want to set all clocks by Greenwich time, forgetting that it is morning in one part of the world at the time they are tolling the curfew in the other.

* "The profits of cattle-farming are smaller than those of the sheepowner (if the latter have good luck, for much depends upon that), but cattle-farming is much more safe as a speculation, and less care, knowledge, and management are required. £2000, laid out on 700 head of cattle, if good runs be procured, might increase the capital in five years from £2000 to £6000, besides enabling the owner to maintain himself, pay wages, &c."—*MS. letter from G. B. Wilkinson.*

CHAPTER II.

London once more! How strange, lone, and savage I feel in the streets! I am ashamed to have so much health and strength, when I look at those slim forms, stooping backs, and pale faces. I pick my way through the crowd with the merciful timidity of a good-natured giant. I am afraid of jostling against a man, for fear the collision should kill him. I get out of the way of a thread-paper clerk, and 'tis a wonder I am not run over by the omnibuses;—I feel as if I could run over them! I perceive, too, that there is something outlandish, peregrinate, and lawless about me. Beau Brummell would certainly have denied me all pretensions to the simple air of a gentleman, for every third passenger turns back to look at me. I retreat to my hotel—send for bootmaker, hatter, tailor, and hair-cutter. I humanise myself from head to foot. Even Ulysses is obliged to have recourse to the arts of Minerva, and, to speak unmetaphorically, "smarten himself up," before the faithful Penelope condescends to acknowledge him.

The artificers promise all despatch. Meanwhile, I hasten to remake acquaintance with my mother country over files of the *Times*, *Post*, *Chronicle*, and *Herald*.

Nothing comes amiss to me, but articles on Australia; from those I turn aside with the true pshaw-supercilious of your practical man.

No more are leaders filled with praise and blame of Trevanion. "Percy's spur is cold." Lord Ulverstone figures only in the *Court Circular*, or "*Fashionable Movements*." Lord Ulverstone entertains a royal duke at dinner, or dines in turn with a royal duke, or has come to town, or gone out of it. At most (faint Platonic reminiscence of the former life), Lord Ulverstone says in the House of Lords, a few words on some question, not a party one; and on which (though affecting perhaps the interests of some few thousands, or millions, as the case may be) men speak without "hears," and are inaudible in the gallery; or Lord Ulverstone takes the chair at an agricultural meeting, or returns thanks when his health is drunk at a dinner at Guildhall. But the daughter rises as the father sets, though over a very different kind of world.

"First ball of the season at Castleton House!" Long description of the rooms and the company; above all, the hostess. Lines on the Marchioness of Castleton's picture in the "Book of Beauty," by the Hon. Fitzroy Fiddledum, beginning with "Art thou an angel from," &c.—a paragraph that pleased me more, on "Lady Castleton's Infant School at Raby Park;" then again —"Lady Castleton, the new patroness at Almack's;" a criticism more rapturous than ever gladdened living poet, on Lady Castleton's superb diamond stomacher, just reset by Storr and Mortimer; Westmacott's bust

of Lady Castleton; Landseer's picture of Lady Castleton and her children, in the costume of the olden time. Not a month in that long file of the *Morning Post* but what Lady Castleton shone forth from the rest of womankind—

"——— Velut inter ignes
Luna minores."

The blood mounted to my cheek. Was it to this splendid constellation in the patrician heaven that my obscure, portionless youth had dared to lift its presumptuous eyes? But what is this? "Indian Intelligence—Skilful retreat of the Sepoys under Captain de Caxton!" A captain already—what is the date of the newspaper? —three months ago. The leading article quotes the name with high praise. Is there no leaven of envy amidst the joy at my heart? How obscure has been my career—how laurelless my poor battle with adverse fortune! Fie, Pisistratus! I am ashamed of thee. Has this accursed Old World, with its feverish rivalries, diseased thee already? Get thee home, quick, to the arms of thy mother, the embrace of thy father—hear Roland's low blessing, that thou hast helped to minister to the very fame of that son. If thou wilt have ambition, take it, not soiled and foul with the mire of London. Let it spring fresh and hardy in the calm air of wisdom; and fed, as with dews, by the loving charities of Home.

CHAPTER III.

It was at sunset that I stole through the ruined court-yard, having left my chaise at the foot of the hill below. Though they whom I came to seek knew that I had arrived in England, they did not, from my letter, expect me till the next day. I had stolen a march upon them; and now, in spite of all the impatience which had urged me thither, I was afraid to enter—afraid to see the change more than ten years had made in those forms, for which, in my memory, Time had stood still. And Roland had, even when we parted, grown old before his time. Then, my father was in the meridian of life, now he had approached to the decline. And my mother, whom I remembered so fair, as if the freshness of her own heart had preserved the soft bloom to the cheek—I could not bear to think that she was no longer young. Blanche, too, whom I had left a child—Blanche, my constant correspondent during those long years of exile, in letters crossed and recrossed, with all the small details that make the eloquence of letter-writing, so that in those epistles I had seen her mind gradually grow up in harmony with the very characters; at first vague and infantine—then somewhat stiff with the first graces

of running hand, then dashing off, free and facile; and, for the last year before I left, so formed, yet so airy—so regular, yet so unconscious of effort—though, in truth, as the calligraphy had become thus matured, I had been half vexed and half pleased to perceive a certain reserve creeping over the style—wishes for my return less expressed from herself than as messages from others; words of the old child-like familiarity repressed; and "Dearest Sisty" abandoned for the cold form of "Dear Cousin." Those letters, coming to me in a spot where maiden and love had been as myths of the bygone, phantasms and *eidola*, only vouchsafed to the visions of fancy, had, by little and little, crept into secret corners of my heart; and out of the wrecks of a former romance, solitude and reverie had gone far to build up the fairy domes of a romance yet to come. My mother's letters had never omitted to make mention of Blanche—of her forethought and tender activity, of her warm heart and sweet temper—and, in many a little home picture, presented her image where I would fain have placed it, not "crystal seeing," but joining my mother in charitable visits to the village, instructing the young, and tending on the old, or teaching herself to illuminate, from an old missal in my father's collection, that she might surprise my uncle with a new genealogical table, with all shields and quarterings, blazoned *or sable*, and *argent;* or flitting round my father where he sat, and watching when he looked round for some book he was too lazy to rise for. Blanche had made a new catalogue, and got it by heart, and knew at once

from what corner of the Heraclea to summon the ghost. On all these little traits had my mother been eulogistically minute; but somehow or other she had never said, at least for the last two years, whether Blanche was pretty or plain. That was a sad omission. I had longed just to ask that simple question, or to imply it delicately and diplomatically; but I know not why, I never dared —for Blanche would have been sure to have read the letter, and what business was it of mine? And if she *was* ugly, what question more awkward both to put and to answer? Now, in childhood, Blanche had just one of those faces that might become very lovely in youth, and would yet quite justify the suspicion that it might become gryphonesque, witch-like, and grim. Yes, Blanche, it is perfectly true! If those large, serious black eyes took a fierce light, instead of a tender—if that nose, which seemed then undecided whether to be straight or to be aquiline, arched off in the latter direction, and assumed the martial, Roman, and imperative character of Roland's manly proboscis—if that face, in childhood too thin, left the blushes of youth to take refuge on two salient peaks by the temples (Cumberland air, too, is famous for the growth of the cheekbone!)—if all that should happen, and it very well might, then, O Blanche, I wish thou hadst never written me those letters; and I might have done wiser things than steel my heart so obdurately to pretty Ellen Bolding's blue eyes and silk shoes. Now, combining together all these doubts and apprehensions, wonder not, O reader, why I stole so

stealthily through the ruined courtyard, crept round to the other side of the tower, gazed wistfully on the sun-setting slant, on the high casements of the hall (too high, alas! to look within) and shrunk yet to enter;—doing battle, as it were, with my heart.

Steps! one's sense of hearing grows so quick in the Bushland!—steps, though as light as ever brushed the dew from the harebell! I crept under the shadow of the huge buttress mantled with ivy. A form comes from the little door at an angle in the ruins—a woman's form. Is it my mother? It is too tall, and the step is more bounding. It winds round the building, it turns to look back, and a sweet voice—a voice strange, yet familiar, calls, tender but chiding, to a truant that lags behind. Poor Juba! he is trailing his long ears on the ground; he is evidently much disturbed in his mind; now he stands still, his nose in the air. Poor Juba! I left thee so slim and so nimble,

> "Thy form that was fashioned as light as a fay's,
> Has assumed a proportion more round;"

years have sobered thee strangely, and made thee obese and Primmins-like.—They have taken too good care of thy creature comforts, O sensual Mauritanian! still, in that mystic intelligence we call instinct, thou art chasing something that years have not swept from thy memory. Thou art deaf to thy lady's voice, however tender and chiding. That's right, come near—nearer—my cousin Blanche; let me have a fair look at thee. Plague take the dog! he flies off from her: he has

found the scent, he is making up to the buttress! Now —pounce—he is caught!—whining ungallant discontent. Shall I not yet see the face! it is buried in Juba's black curls. Kisses too! Wicked Blanche! to waste on a dumb animal what, I heartily hope, many a good Christian would be exceedingly glad of! Juba struggles in vain, and is borne off! I don't think that those eyes can have taken the fierce turn, and Roland's eagle nose can never go with that voice, which has the coo of the dove.

I leave my hiding-place, and steal after the Voice, and its owner. Where can she be going? Not far. She springs up the hill whereon the lords of the castle once administered justice,—that hill which commands the land far and wide, and from which can be last caught the glimpse of the westering sun. How gracefully still is that attitude of wistful repose! Into what delicate curves do form and drapery harmoniously flow! How softly distinct stands the lithe image against the purple hues of the sky! Then again comes the sweet voice, gay and carolling as a bird's—now in snatches of song, now in playful appeals to that dull, four-footed friend. She is telling him something that must make the black ears stand on end, for I just catch the words, "He is coming," and "home."

I cannot see the sun set where I lurk in my ambush, amidst the brake and the ruins; but I *feel* that the orb has passed from the landscape, in the fresher air of the twilight, in the deeper silence of eve. Lo! Hesper

comes forth; at his signal, star after star, come the hosts—

> "Ch'eran con lui, quando l'amor divino,
> Mosse da primà quelle cose belle!"

And the sweet voice is hushed.

Then slowly the watcher descends the hill on the opposite side—the form escapes from my view. What charm has gone from the twilight? See, again, where the step steals through the ruins and along the desolate court. Ah! deep and true heart, do I divine the remembrance that leads thee? I pass through the wicket, down the dell, skirt the laurels, and behold the face, looking up to the stars—the face which had nestled to my breast in the sorrow of parting years, long years ago: on the grave where we had sat, I the boy, thou the infant—there, O Blanche! is thy fair face—(fairer than the fondest dream that had gladdened my exile) —vouchsafed to my gaze!

"Blanche, my cousin!—again, again—soul with soul, amidst the dead! Look up, Blanche; it is I."

CHAPTER IV.

"Go in first and prepare them, dear Blanche; I will wait by the door. Leave it ajar, that I may see them."

Roland is leaning against the wall—old armour suspended over the grey head of the soldier. It is but a glance that I give to the dark cheek and high brow; no change there for the worse—no new sign of decay. Rather, if anything, Roland seems younger than when I left. Calm is the brow—no shame on it now, Roland; and the lips, once so compressed, smile with ease—no struggle now, Roland "not to complain." A glance shows me all this.

"Papæ!" says my father, and I hear the fall of a book, "I can't read a line. He is coming to-morrow! —to-morrow! If we lived to the age of Methuselah, Kitty, we could never reconcile philosophy and man; that is, if the poor man's to be plagued with a good, affectionate son!"

And my father gets up and walks to and fro. One minute more, father—one minute more—and I am on thy breast! Time, too, has dealt gently with thee, as he doth with those for whom the wild passions and keen cares of the world never sharpen his scythe. The

broad front looks more broad, for the locks are more scanty and thin ; but still not a furrow.

"Whence comes that short sigh ! "

"What is really the time, Blanche ? Did you look at the turret clock ? Well, just go and look again."

"Kitty," quoth my father, "you have not only asked what time it is thrice within the last ten minutes, but you have got my watch, and Roland's great chronometer, and the Dutch clock out of the kitchen, all before you, and they all concur in the same tale—to-day is not to-morrow."

"They are all wrong, I know," said my mother, with mild firmness ; "and they've never gone right since *he* left."

Now comes out a letter—for I hear the rustle—and then a step glides towards the lamp ; and the dear, gentle, womanly face—fair still, fair ever for me, fair as when it bent over my pillow, in childhood's first sickness, or when we threw flowers at each other on the lawn, at sunny noon ! And now Blanche is whispering ; and now the flutter, the start, the cry—"It is true ! it is true ! Your arms, mother. Close, close round my neck, as in the old time. Father ! Roland, too ! Oh, joy ! joy ! joy ! home again — home till death ! "

CHAPTER V.

From a dream of the Bushland, howling dingoes,* and the war-whoop of the wild men, I wake and see the sun shining in through the jasmine that Blanche herself has had trained round the window—old school-books, neatly ranged round the wall — fishing-rods, cricket-bats, foils, and the old-fashioned gun—and my mother seated by the bed-side—and Juba whining and scratching to get up. Had I taken thy murmured blessing, my mother, for the whoop of the blacks, and Juba's low whine for the howl of the dingoes?

Then what days of calm exquisite delight!—the interchange of heart with heart; what walks with Roland, and tales of him once our shame, now our pride; and the art with which the old man would lead those walks round by the village, that some favourite gossips might stop and ask, "What news of his brave young honour?"

I strive to engage my uncle in my projects for the repair of the ruins—for the culture of those wide bogs and moorlands: why is it that he turns away and looks down embarrassed? Ah, I guess! his true heir now is restored to him. He cannot consent that I should

* *Dingoes*—the name given by Australian natives to the wild dogs.

invest this dross, for which (the Great Book once published) I have no other use, in the house and the lands that will pass to his son. Neither would he suffer me so to invest even his son's fortune, the bulk of which I still hold in trust for that son. True, in his career, my cousin may require to have his money always forthcoming. But *I*, who have no career, — pooh! these scruples will rob me of half the pleasure my years of toil were to purchase. I must contrive it somehow or other: what if he would let me house and moorland on a long improving lease? Then, for the rest, there is a pretty little property to be sold close by, on which I can retire, when my cousin, as heir of the family, comes, perhaps with a wife, to reside at the Tower. I must consider of all this, and talk it over with Bolt, when my mind is at leisure from happiness to turn to such matters; meanwhile I fall back on my favourite proverb,—"*Where there's a will there's a way.*"

What smiles and tears, and laughter and careless prattle with my mother, and roundabout questions from her, to know if I had never lost my heart in the Bush? and evasive answers from me, to punish her for not letting out that Blanche was so charming. "I fancied Blanche had grown the image of her father, who has a fine martial head certainly, but not seen to advantage in petticoats! How could you be so silent with a theme so attractive?"

"Blanche made me promise."

Why, I wonder. Therewith I fell musing.

What quiet delicious hours are spent with my father in his study, or by the pond, where he still feeds the carps, that have grown into Cyprinidian leviathans. The duck, alas! has departed this life—the only victim that the Grim King has carried off; so I mourn, but am resigned to that lenient composition of the great tribute to Nature. I am sorry to say the Great Book has advanced but slowly—by no means yet fit for publication, for it is resolved that it shall not come out as first proposed, a part at a time, but *totus, teres, atque rotundus.* The matter has spread beyond its original compass; no less than five volumes—and those of the amplest—will contain the History of Human Error. However, we are far in the fourth, and one must not hurry Minerva.

My father is enchanted with Uncle Jack's "noble conduct," as he calls it; but he scolds me for taking the money, and doubts as to the propriety of returning it. In these matters my father is quite as Quixotical as Roland. I am forced to call in my mother as umpire between us, and she settles the matter at once by an appeal to feeling. "Ah, Austin! do you not humble me, if you are too proud to accept what is due to you from my brother!"

"*Velit, nolit, quod amica,*" answered my father, taking off and rubbing his spectacles—"which means, Kitty, that when a man's married he has no will of his own. To think," added Mr Caxton, musingly, "that in this world one cannot be sure of the simplest mathematical definition! You see, Pisistratus, that the angles

of a triangle so decidedly scalene as your Uncle Jack's, may be equal to the angles of a right-angled triangle, after all!" *

The long privation of books has quite restored all my appetite for them. How much I have to pick up! —what a compendious scheme of reading I and my father chalk out! I see enough to fill up all the leisure of life. But, somehow or other, Greek and Latin stand still: nothing charms me like Italian. Blanche and I are reading Metastasio, to the great indignation of my father, who calls it "rubbish," and wants to substitute Dante. I have no associations at present with the souls

> "Che son contenti
> Nel fuoco;"

I am already one of the "*beate gente.*" Yet, in spite of Metastasio, Blanche and I are not so intimate as cousins ought to be. If we are by accident alone, I become as silent as a Turk,—as formal as Sir Charles Grandison. I caught myself calling her *Miss* Blanche the other day.

I must not forget thee, honest Squills!—nor thy delight at my health and success; nor thy exclamation

* Not having again to advert to Uncle Jack, I may be pardoned for informing the reader, by way of annotation, that he continues to prosper surprisingly in Australia, though the Tibbets' Wheal stands still for want of workmen. Despite of a few ups and downs, I have had no fear of his success until this year (1849), when I tremble to think what effect the discovery of the gold mines in California may have on his lively imagination. If thou escapest that snare, Uncle Jack, *res age, tutus eris*,—thou art safe for life!

of pride (one hand on my pulse and the other griping hard the "ball" of my arm). "It all comes of my citrate of iron; nothing like it for children; it has an effect on the cerebral developments of hope and combativeness." Nor can I wholly omit mention of poor Mrs Primmins, who still calls me "Master Sisty," and is breaking her heart that I will not wear the new flannel waistcoats she had such pleasure in making—"Young gentlemen just growing up are so apt to go off in a galloping 'sumption!" "She knew just such another as Master Sisty, when she lived at Torquay, who wasted away, and went out like a *snuff*, all because he would not wear flannel waistcoats." Therewith my mother looks grave, and says, "One can't take too much precaution."

Suddenly the whole neighbourhood is thrown into commotion. Trevanion—I beg his pardon, Lord Ulverstone—is coming to settle for good at Compton. Fifty hands are employed daily in putting the grounds into hasty order. Fourgons, and waggons, and vans have disgorged all the necessaries a great man requires, where he means to eat, drink, and sleep; books, wines, pictures, furniture. I recognise my old patron still. He is in earnest, whatever he does. I meet my friend, his steward, who tells me that Lord Ulverstone finds his favourite seat, near London, too exposed to interruption; and moreover, that, as he has there completed all improvements that wealth and energy can effect, he has less occupation for agricultural pursuits, to which he has grown more and more partial, than on the wide and

princely domain which has hitherto wanted the master's eye. "He is a bra' farmer, I know," quoth the steward, "so far as the theory goes; but I don't think we in the north want great lords to teach us how to follow the pleugh." The steward's sense of dignity is hurt; but he is an honest fellow, and really glad to see the family come to settle in the old place.

They have arrived, and with them the Castletons, and a whole *posse comitatus* of guests. The county paper is full of fine names.

"What on earth did Lord Ulverstone mean by pretending to get out of the way of troublesome visitors?"

"My dear Pisistratus," answered my father to that exclamation, "it is not the visitors who come, but the visitors who stay away, that most trouble the repose of a retired minister. In all the procession, he sees but the images of Brutus and Cassius—that are *not* there! And depend on it, also, a retirement so near London did not make noise enough. You see, a retiring statesman is like that fine carp—the farther he leaps from the water, the greater splash he makes in falling into the weeds! But," added Mr Caxton, in a repentant tone, "this jesting does not become us; and, if I indulged it, it is only because I am heartily glad that Trevanion is likely now to find out his true vocation. And as soon as the fine people he brings with him have left him alone in his library, I trust he will settle to that vocation, and be happier than he has been yet."

"And that vocation, sir, is——?"

"Metaphysics!" said my father. "He will be quite

at home in puzzling over Berkeley, and considering whether the Speaker's chair, and the official red boxes, were really things whose ideas of figure, extension, and hardness, were all in the mind. It will be a great consolation to him to agree with Berkeley, and to find that he has only been baffled by immaterial phantasma!"

My father was quite right. The repining, subtle, truth-weighing Trevanion, plagued by his conscience into seeing all sides of a question (for the least question has more than two sides, and is hexagonal at least), was much more fitted to discover the origin of ideas than to convince Cabinets and Nations that two and two make four—a proposition on which he himself would have agreed with Abraham Tucker, where that most ingenious and suggestive of all English metaphysicians observes, "Well persuaded as I am that two and two make four, if I were to meet with a person of credit, candour, and understanding, who should sincerely call it in question, I would give him a hearing; for I am not more certain of that than of the whole being greater than a part. And yet I could myself suggest *some considerations that might seem to controvert this point.*" * I can so well imagine Trevanion listening to "some person of credit, candour, and understanding," in disproof of that vulgar proposition that twice two make four! But the news of this arrival, including that of Lady Castleton, disturbed me greatly, and I took to

* *Light of Nature—chapter on Judgment.*—See the very ingenious illustration of doubt, "whether the part is always greater than the whole"—taken from time, or rather eternity.

long wanderings alone. In one of these rambles, they all called at the Tower—Lord and Lady Ulverstone, the Castletons and their children. I escaped the visit; and on my return home, there was a certain delicacy respecting old associations that restrained much talk, before me, on so momentous an event. Roland, like me, had kept out of the way. Blanche, poor child, ignorant of the antecedents, was the most communicative. And the especial theme she selected—was the grace and beauty of Lady Castleton!

A pressing invitation to spend some days at the castle had been cordially given to all. It was accepted only by myself: I wrote word that I would come.

Yes; I longed to prove the strength of my own self-conquest, and accurately test the nature of the feelings that had disturbed me. That any sentiment which could be called love remained for Lady Castleton, the wife of another, and that other a man with so many claims on my affection as her lord, I held as a moral impossibility. But, with all those lively impressions of early youth still engraved on my heart—impressions of the image of Fanny Trevanion as the fairest and brightest of human beings—could I feel free to love again? Could I seek to woo, and rivet to myself for ever, the entire and virgin affections of another, while there was a possibility that I might compare and regret? No; either I must feel that, if Fanny were again single—could be mine without obstacle, human or divine—she had ceased to be the one I would single out of the world; or, though regarding love as the dead, I would be faithful

to its memory and its ashes. My mother sighed and looked fluttered and uneasy all the morning of the day on which I was to repair to Compton. She even seemed cross, for about the third time in her life, and paid no compliment to Mr Stultz, when my shooting-jacket was exchanged for a black frock, which that artist had pronounced to be "splendid;" neither did she honour me with any of those little attentions to the contents of my portmanteau, and the perfect "getting up" of my white waistcoats and cravats, which made her natural instincts on such memorable occasions. There was also a sort of querulous, pitying tenderness in her tone, when she spoke to Blanche, which was quite pathetic; though, fortunately, its cause remained dark and impenetrable to the innocent comprehension of one who could not see where the past filled the urns of the future at the fountain of life. My father understood me better, shook me by the hand as I got into the chaise, and muttered, out of Seneca—

"Non tanquam transfuga, sed tanquam explorator."
"Not to desert, but examine."

Quite right.

CHAPTER VI.

Agreeably to the usual custom in great houses, as soon as I arrived at Compton, I was conducted to my room, to adjust my toilet, or compose my spirits by solitude :—it wanted an hour to dinner. I had not, however, been thus left ten minutes, before the door opened, and Trevanion himself (as I would fain still call him) stood before me. Most cordial were his greeting and welcome ; and, seating himself by my side, he continued to converse, in his peculiar way—bluntly eloquent, and carelessly learned—till the half-hour bell rang. He talked on Australia, the Wakefield system—cattle—books, his trouble in arranging his library—his schemes for improving his property, and embellishing his grounds—his delight to find my father look so well—his determination to see a great deal of him, whether his old college friend would or not. He talked, in short, of everything except politics, and his own past career—showing only his soreness in that silence. But (independently of the mere work of time) he looked yet more worn and jaded in his leisure than he had done in the full tide of business ; and his former abrupt quickness of manner now seemed to par-

take of feverish excitement. I hoped that my father *would* see much of him, for I felt that the weary mind wanted soothing.

Just as the second bell rang, I entered the drawing-room. There were at least twenty guests present—each guest, no doubt, some planet of fashion or fame, with satellites of its own. But I saw only two forms distinctly; first, Lord Castleton, conspicuous with star and garter—somewhat ampler and portlier in proportions, and with a frank dash of grey in the silky waves of his hair; but still as pre-eminent as ever for that beauty—the charm of which depends less than any other upon youth—arising, as it does, from a felicitous combination of bearing and manner, and that exquisite suavity of expression which steals into the heart, and pleases so much that it becomes a satisfaction to admire! Of Lord Castleton, indeed, it might be said, as of Alcibiades, "that he was beautiful at every age." I felt my breath come thick, and a mist passed before my eyes, as Lord Castleton led me through the crowd, and the radiant vision of Fanny Trevanion, how altered—and how dazzling!—burst upon me.

I felt the light touch of that hand of snow; but no guilty thrill shot through my veins. I heard the voice musical as ever—lower than it was once, and more subdued in its key, but steadfast and untremulous—it was no longer the voice that made "my soul plant itself in the ears." * The event was over, and I knew that the dream had fled from the waking world for ever.

* Sir Philip Sidney.

"Another old friend!" as Lady Ulverstone, came forth from a little group of children, leading one fine boy of nine years old, while one, two or three years younger clung to her gown. "Another old friend!—and," added Lady Ulverstone, after the first kind greetings, "two new ones when the old are gone." The slight melancholy left the voice, as, after presenting to me the little Viscount, she drew forward the more bashful Lord Albert, who indeed had something of his grandsire's and namesake's look of refined intelligence in his brow and eyes.

The watchful tact of Lord Castleton was quick in terminating whatever embarrassment might belong to these introductions, as, leaning lightly on my arm, he drew me forward, and presented me to the guests more immediately in our neighbourhood, who seemed by their earnest cordiality to have been already prepared for the introduction.

Dinner was now announced, and I welcomed that sense of relief and segregation with which one settles into one's own "particular" chair at your large miscellaneous entertainment.

I stayed three days at that house. How truly had Trevanion said that Fanny would make "an excellent great lady." What perfect harmony between her manners and her position; just retaining enough of the girl's seductive gaiety and bewitching desire to please, to soften the new dignity of bearing she had unconsciously assumed—less, after all, as a great lady, than as wife and mother: with a fine breeding, per-

haps a little languid and artificial, as compared with her lord's—which sprang, fresh and healthful, wholly from nature—but still so void of all the chill of condescension, or the subtle impertinence that belongs to that order of the inferior *noblesse*, which boasts the name of "exclusives;" with what grace, void of prudery, she took the adulation of the flatterers, turning from them to her children, or escaping lightly to Lord Castleton, with an ease that drew round her at once the protection of hearth and home.

And certainly Lady Castleton was more incontestably beautiful than Fanny Trevanion had been.

All this I acknowledged, not with a sigh and a pang, but with a pure feeling of pride and delight. I might have loved madly and presumptuously, as boys will do; but I had loved worthily—the love left no blush on my manhood; and Fanny's very happiness was my perfect and total cure of every wound in my heart not quite scarred over before. Had she been discontented, sorrowful, without joy in the ties she had formed, there might have been more danger that I should brood over the past, and regret the loss of its idol. Here there was none. And the very improvement in her beauty had so altered its character—*so* altered—that Fanny Trevanion and Lady Castleton seemed two persons. And, thus observing and listening to her, I could now dispassionately perceive such differences in our nature as seemed to justify Trevanion's assertion, which once struck me as so monstrous, "that we should not have been happy had fate permitted our union." Pure-

hearted and simple though she remained in the artificial world, still that world was her element; its interests occupied her; its talk, though just chastened from scandal, flowed from her lips. To borrow the words of a man who was himself a courtier, and one so distinguished that he could afford to sneer at Chesterfield,* "*She* had the routine of that style of conversation which is a sort of gold leaf, that is a great embellishment where it is joined to anything else." I will not add, "but makes a very poor figure by itself,"—for *that* Lady Castleton's conversation certainly did not do—perhaps, indeed, because it was not "by itself"—and the gold leaf was all the better for being thin, since it could not cover even the surface of the sweet and amiable nature over which it was spread. Still this was not the mind in which now, in maturer experience, I would seek to find sympathy with manly action, or companionship in the charms of intellectual leisure.

There was about this same beautiful favourite of nature and fortune a certain helplessness, which had even its grace in that high station, and which, perhaps, tended to insure her domestic peace, for it served to attach her to those who had won influence over her, and was happily accompanied by a most affectionate disposition. But still, if less favoured by circumstances, less sheltered from every wind that could visit her too roughly—if, as the wife of a man of inferior rank, she had failed of that high seat and silken

* Lord Hervey's *Memoirs of George II.*

canopy reserved for the spoiled darlings of fortune—that helplessness might have become querulous. I thought of poor Ellen Bolding and her silken shoes. Fanny Trevanion seemed to have come into the world with silk shoes—not to walk where there was a stone or a brier! I heard something, in the gossip of those around, that confirmed this view of Lady Castleton's character, while it deepened my admiration of her lord, and showed me how wise had been her choice, and how resolutely he had prepared himself to vindicate his own. One evening as I was sitting, a little apart from the rest, with two men of the London world, to whose talk—for it ran upon the *on-dits* and anecdotes of a region long strange to me—I was a silent but amused listener; one of the two said—"Well, I don't know anywhere a more excellent creature than Lady Castleton; so fond of her children—and her tone to Castleton so exactly what it ought to be—so affectionate, and yet, as it were, respectful. And the more credit to her, if, as they say, she was not in love with him when she married (to be sure, handsome as he is, he is twice her age)! And no woman could have been more flattered and courted by Lotharios and lady-killers than Lady Castleton had been. I confess, to my shame, that Castleton's luck puzzles me, for it is rather an exception to my general experience."

"My dear * * *," said the other, who was one of those wise men of pleasure, who occasionally startle us into wondering how they come to be so clever, and yet rest contented with mere drawing-room celebrity—men

who seem always idle, yet appear to have read everything; always indifferent to what passes before them, yet who know the character and divine the secrets of everybody—"my dear * * *," said the gentleman, "you would not be puzzled if you had studied Lord Castleton, instead of her ladyship. Of all the conquests ever made by Sedley Beaudesert, when the two fairest dames of the Faubourg are said to have fought for his smiles, in the *Bois de Boulogne*—no conquest ever cost him such pains, or so taxed his knowledge of women, as that of his wife after marriage! He was not satisfied with her hand, he was resolved to have her whole heart, 'one entire and perfect chrysolite;' and he has succeeded! Never was husband so watchful, and so little jealous—never one who confided so generously in all that was best in his wife, yet was so alert in protecting and guarding her, wherever she was weakest! When, in the second year of marriage, that dangerous German Prince Von Leibenfels attached himself so perseveringly to Lady Castleton, and the scandal-mongers pricked up their ears, in hopes of a victim, I watched Castleton with as much interest as if I had been looking over Deschappelles playing at chess. You never saw anything so masterly; he pitted himself against his highness with the cool confidence, not of a blind spouse, but a fortunate rival. He surpassed him in the delicacy of his attentions, he outshone him by his careless magnificence. Leibenfels had the impertinence to send Lady Castleton a bouquet of some rare flowers just in fashion. Castleton, an hour before, had filled her

whole balcony with the same costly exotics, as if they were too common for nosegays, and only just worthy to bloom for her a day. Young and really accomplished as Liebenfels is, Castelton eclipsed him by his grace, and fooled him with his wit; he laid little plots to turn his moustache and guitar into ridicule; he seduced him into a hunt with the buckhounds (though Castleton himself had not hunted before, since he was thirty), and drew him, spluttering German oaths, out of the slough of a ditch; he made him the laughter of the clubs; he put him fairly out of fashion—and all with such suavity and politeness, and bland sense of superiority, that it was the finest piece of high comedy you ever beheld. The poor prince, who had been coxcomb enough to lay a bet with a Frenchman as to his success with the English in general, and Lady Castleton in particular, went away with a face as long as Don Quixote's. If you had but seen him at S—— House, the night before he took leave of the island, and his comical grimace when Castleton offered him a pinch of the Beaudesert mixture! No! the fact is, that Castleton made it the object of his existence, the masterpiece of his art, to secure to himself a happy home, and the entire possession of his wife's heart. The first two or three years, I fear, cost him more trouble than any other man ever took, with his own wife at least; but he may now rest in peace—Lady Castleton is won, and for ever."

As my gentleman ceased, Lord Castleton's noble head rose above the group standing round him; and I

saw Lady Castleton turn with a look of well-bred fatigue from a handsome young fop, who had affected to lower his voice while he spoke to her, and, encountering the eyes of her husband, the look changed at once into one of such sweet smiling affection, such frank, unmistakable wife-like pride, that it seemed a response to the assertion—"Lady Castleton is won, and for ever."

Yes, that story increased my admiration for Lord Castleton: it showed me with what forethought and earnest sense of responsibility he had undertaken the charge of a life, the guidance of a character yet undeveloped: it lastingly acquitted him of the levity that had been attributed to Sedley Beaudesert. But I felt more than ever contented that the task had devolved on one whose temper and experience had so fitted him to discharge it. That German prince made me tremble from sympathy with the husband, and in a sort of relative shudder for myself! Had that episode happened to me, I could never have drawn "high comedy" from it!—I could never have so happily closed the fifth act with a pinch of the Beaudesert mixture! No, no; to my homely sense of man's life and employment, there was nothing alluring in the prospect of watching over the golden tree in the garden, with a "woe to the Argus, if Mercury once lull him to sleep!" Wife of mine shall need no watching, save in sickness and sorrow! Thank Heaven that my way of life does not lead through the roseate thoroughfares, beset with

German princes laying bets for my perdition, and fine gentlemen admiring the skill with which I play at chess for so terrible a stake! To each rank and each temper, its own laws. I acknowledge that Fanny is an excellent marchioness, and Lord Castleton an incomparable marquess. But, Blanche! if I can win thy true, simple heart, I trust I shall begin at the fifth act of high comedy, and say at the altar—

"Once won, won for ever."

CHAPTER VII.

I RODE home on a horse my host lent me; and Lord Castleton rode part of the way with me, accompanied by his two boys, who bestrode manfully their Shetland ponies, and cantered on before us. I paid some compliment to the spirit and intelligence of these children —a compliment they well deserved.

"Why, yes," said the Marquess, with a father's becoming pride, "I hope neither of them will shame his grandsire, Trevanion. Albert (though not quite the wonder poor Lady Ulverstone declares him to be) is rather too precocious; and it is all I can do to prevent his being spoilt by flattery to his cleverness, which, I think, is much worse than even flattery to rank—a danger to which, despite Albert's destined inheritance, the elder brother is more exposed. Eton soon takes out the conceit of the latter and more vulgar kind. I remember Lord —— (you know what an unpretending, good-natured fellow he is now) strutting into the play-ground, a raw boy, with his chin up in the air, and burly Dick Johnson (rather a tuft-hunter now, I'm afraid) coming up, and saying, 'Well, sir, and who the deuce are you?' 'Lord ——,' says the poor

devil unconsciously, 'eldest son of the Marquess of ——.' 'Oh, indeed!' cries Johnson; 'then, there's one kick for my lord, and two for the marquess!' I am not fond of kicking, but I doubt if anything ever did —— more good than those three kicks! But," continued Lord Castleton, "when one flatters a boy for his cleverness, even Eton itself cannot kick the conceit out of him. Let him be last in the form, and the greatest dunce ever flogged, there are always people to say that your public schools don't do for your great geniuses. And it is ten to one but what the father is plagued into taking the boy home, and giving him a private tutor, who fixes him into a prig for ever. A coxcomb in dress," said the Marquess, smiling, "is a trifler it would ill become me to condemn, and I own that I would rather see a youth a fop than a sloven; but a coxcomb in ideas—why, the younger he is, the more unnatural and disagreeable. Now, Albert, over that hedge, sir."

"That hedge, papa? The pony will never do it."

"Then," said Lord Castleton, taking off his hat with politeness, "I fear you will deprive us of the pleasure of your company."

The boy laughed, and made gallantly for the hedge, though I saw by his change of colour that it a little alarmed him. The pony could not clear the hedge; but it was a pony of tact and resources, and it scrambled through like a cat, inflicting sundry rents and tears on a jacket of Raphael blue.

Lord Castleton said, smiling, "You see, I teach them

to get through a difficulty one way or the other. Between you and me," he added, seriously, "I perceive a very different world rising round the next generation from that in which I first went forth and took my pleasure. I shall rear my boys accordingly. Rich noblemen must now-a-days be useful men; and if they can't leap over briers, they must scramble through them. Don't you agree with me?"

"Yes, heartily."

"Marriage makes a man much wiser," said the Marquess, after a pause. "I smile now, to think how often I sighed at the thought of growing old. Now I reconcile myself to the grey hairs without dreams of a wig, and enjoy youth still—for," pointing to his sons, "it is *there!*"

"He has very nearly found out the secret of the saffron bag now," said my father, pleased and rubbing his hands, when I repeated this talk with Lord Castleton. "But I fear poor Trevanion," he added, with a compassionate change of countenance, "is still far away from the sense of Lord Bacon's receipt. And his wife, you say, out of very love for him, keeps always drawing discord from the one jarring wire."

"You must talk to her, sir."

"I will," said my father, angrily; "and scold her too—foolish woman! I shall tell her Luther's advice to the Prince of Anhalt."

"What was that, sir?"

"Only to throw a baby into the river Maldon, because it had sucked dry five wet-nurses besides the

mother, and must therefore be a changeling. Why, that ambition of hers would suck dry all the mother's milk in the genus mammalian. And such a withered, rickety, malign little changeling, too! She shall fling it into the river, by all that is holy!" cried my father; and, suiting the action to the word, away into the pond went the spectacles he had been rubbing indignantly for the last three minutes. "Papæ!" faltered my father, aghast, while the Ceprinidæ, mistaking the dip of the spectacles for an invitation to dinner, came scudding up to the bank. "It is all your fault," said Mr Caxton, recovering himself. "Get me the new tortoise-shell spectacles and a large slice of bread. You see that when fish are reduced to a pond they recognise a benefactor, which they never do when rising at flies, or groping for worms, in the waste world of a river. Hem!—a hint for the Ulverstones. Besides the bread and the spectacles, just look out and bring me the old black-letter copy of St Anthony's *Sermon to Fishes.*"

CHAPTER VIII.

Some weeks now have passed since my return to the Tower: the Castletons are gone, and all Trevanion's gay guests. And since these departures, visits between the two houses have been interchanged often, and the bonds of intimacy are growing close. Twice has my father held long conversations apart with Lady Ulverstone (my mother is not foolish enough to feel a pang now at such confidences), and the result has become apparent. Lady Ulverstone has ceased all talk against the world and the public—ceased to fret the galled pride of her husband with irritating sympathy. She has made herself the true partner of his present occupations, as she was of those in the past; she takes interest in farming, and gardens, and flowers, and those philosophical peaches which come from trees academical that Sir William Temple reared in his graceful retirement. She does more—she sits by her husband's side in the library, reads the books he reads, or, if in Latin, coaxes him into construing them. Insensibly she leads him into studies farther and farther remote from Blue Books and Hansard; and, taking my father's hint,

"Allures to brighter worlds, and leads the way."

They are inseparable. Darby-and-Joan-like, you see them together in the library, the garden, or the homely little pony-phaeton, for which Lord Ulverstone has resigned the fast-trotting cob, once identified with the eager looks of the busy Trevanion. It is most touching, most beautiful! And to think what a victory over herself the proud woman must have obtained!—never a thought that seems to murmur, never a word to recall the ambitious man back from the philosophy into which his active mind flies for refuge. And with the effort, her brow has become so serene! That care-worn expression, which her fine features once wore, is fast vanishing. And what affects me most, is to think that this change (which is already settling into happiness) has been wrought by Austin's counsels and appeals to her sense and affection. "It is to you," he said, "that Trevanion must look for more than comfort—for cheerfulness and satisfaction. Your child is gone from you—the world ebbs away—you two should be all in all to each other. Be so." Thus, after paths so devious, meet those who had parted in youth, now on the verge of age. There, in the same scenes where Austin and Ellinor had first formed acquaintance, he, aiding her to soothe the wounds inflicted by the ambition that had separated their lots, and both taking counsel to insure the happiness of the rival she had preferred.

After all this vexed public life of toil, and care, and ambition—to see Trevanion and Ellinor drawing closer and closer to each other, knowing private life and its

charms for the first time—verily, it would have been a theme for an elegiast like Tibullus.

But all this while a younger love, with no blurred leaves to erase from the chronicle, has been keeping sweet account of the summer time. "Very near are two hearts that have no guile between them," saith a proverb, traced back to Confucius. O ye days of still sunshine, reflected back from ourselves—O ye haunts, endeared evermore by a look, tone, or smile, or rapt silence; when more and more with each hour unfolded before me, that nature, so tenderly coy, so cheerful though serious, so attuned by simple cares to affection, yet so filled, from soft musings and solitude, with a poetry that gave grace to duties the homeliest—setting life's trite things to music! Here nature and fortune concurred alike; equal in birth and pretensions—similar in tastes and in objects—loving the healthful activity of purpose, but content to find it around us—neither envying the wealthy nor vying with the great; each framed by temper to look on the bright side of life, and find founts of delight, and green spots fresh with verdure, where eyes but accustomed to cities could see but the sands and the mirage: while afar (as man's duty) I had gone through the travail that, in wrestling with fortune, gives pause to the heart to recover its losses, and know the value of love, in its graver sense of life's earnest realities; Heaven had reared, at the thresholds of home, the young tree that should cover the roof with its blossoms, and embalm with its fragrance the daily air of my being.

It had been the joint prayer of those kind ones I left, that such might be my reward; and each had contributed, in his or her several way, to fit that fair life for the ornament and joy of the one that now asked to guard and to cherish it. From Roland came that deep, earnest honour—a man's in its strength, and a woman's in its delicate sense of refinement. From Roland, that quick taste for all things noble in poetry, and lovely in nature—the eye that sparkled to read how Bayard stood alone at the bridge, and saved an army—or wept over the page that told how the dying Sidney put the bowl from his burning lips. Is that too masculine a spirit for some? Let each please himself. Give me the woman who can echo all thoughts that are noblest in men! And that eye, too—like Roland's—could pause to note each finer mesh in the wonderful webwork of beauty. No landscape to her was the same yesterday and to-day—a deeper shade from the skies could change the face of the moors—the springing up of fresh wild flowers, the very song of some bird unheard before, lent variety to the broad rugged heath. Is that too simple a source of pleasure for some to prize? Be it so to those who need the keen stimulants that cities afford. But, if we were to pass all our hours in those scenes, it was something to have the tastes which own no monotony in Nature.

All this came from Roland; and to this, with thoughtful wisdom, my father had added enough knowledge from books to make those tastes more attractive, and

to lend to impulsive perception of beauty and goodness the culture that draws finer essence from beauty, and expands the Good into the Better by heightening the sight of the survey; hers, knowledge enough to sympathise with intellectual pursuits, not enough to dispute on man's province—Opinion. Still, whether in nature or in lore, still

> "The fairest garden in her looks,
> And in her mind the choicest books!"

And yet, thou wise Austin—and thou, Roland, poet that never wrote a verse—yet your work had been incomplete, but then Woman stepped in, and the mother gave to her she designed for a daughter the last finish of meek everyday charities—the mild household virtues—"the soft word that turneth away wrath"—the angelic pity for man's rougher faults—the patience that bideth its time—and, exacting no "rights of woman," subjugates us, delighted, to the invisible thrall.

Dost thou remember, my Blanche, that soft summer evening when the vows our eyes had long interchanged stole at last from the lip? Wife mine! come to my side — look over me while I write: there, thy tears (happy tears are they not, Blanche?) have blotted the page! Shall we tell the world more? Right, my Blanche; no words should profane the place where those tears have fallen!

. . . . . .

And here I would fain conclude; but alas, and alas! that I cannot associate with our hopes, on this side the

grave, him who, we fondly hoped (even on the bridal-day, that gave his sister to my arms), would come to the hearth where his place now stood vacant, contented with glory, and fitted at last for the tranquil happiness which long years of repentance and trial had deserved.

Within the first year of my marriage, and shortly after a gallant share in a desperate action, which had covered his name with new honours, just when we were most elated, in the blinded vanity of human pride, came the fatal news! The brief career was run. He died, as I knew he would have prayed to die, at the close of a day ever memorable in the annals of that marvellous empire, which valour without parallel has annexed to the Throne of the Isles. He died in the arms of Victory, and his last smile met the eyes of the noble chief who, even in that hour, could pause from the tide of triumph by the victim it had cast on its bloody shore. "One favour," faltered the dying man; "I have a father at home—he, too, is a soldier. In my tent is my will: it gives all I have to him—he can take it without shame. That is not enough! Write to him—you—with your own hand, and tell him how his son fell!" And the hero fulfilled the prayer, and that letter is dearer to Roland than all the long roll of the ancestral dead! Nature has reclaimed her rights, and the forefathers recede before the son.

In a side chapel of the old Gothic church, amidst the mouldering tombs of those who fought at Acre and Agin-

court, a fresh tablet records the death of HERBERT DE CAXTON, with the simple inscription—

HE FELL ON THE FIELD:
HIS COUNTRY MOURNED HIM,
AND HIS FATHER IS RESIGNED.

Years have rolled away since that tablet was placed there, and changes have passed on that nook of earth which bounds our little world: fair chambers have sprung up midst the desolate ruins; far and near, smiling corn-fields replace the bleak dreary moors. The land supports more retainers than ever thronged to the pennon of its barons of old; and Roland can look from his Tower over domains that are reclaimed, year by year, from the waste, till the ploughshare shall win a lordship more opulent than those feudal chiefs ever held by the tenure of the sword. And the hospitable mirth that had fled from the ruin has been renewed in the hall; and rich and poor, great and lowly, have welcomed the rise of an ancient house from the dust of decay. All those dreams of Roland's youth are fulfilled; but they do not gladden his heart like the thought that his son, at the last, was worthy of his line, and the hope that no gulf shall yawn between the two when the Grand Circle is rounded, and man's past and man's future meet where Time disappears. Never was that lost one forgotten!—never was his name breathed but tears rushed to the eyes; and, each morning, the peasant going to his labour might see Roland steal

down the dell to the deep-set door of the chapel. None presume there to follow his steps, or intrude on his solemn thoughts; for there, in sight of that tablet, are his orisons made, and the remembrance of the dead forms a part of the commune with heaven. But the old man's step is still firm, and his brow still erect; and you may see in his face that it was no hollow boast which proclaimed that the "father was resigned:" and ye who doubt if too Roman a hardness might not be found in that Christian resignation, think what it is to have feared for a son the life of shame, and ask then, if the sharpest grief to a father is in a son's death of honour!

Years have passed, and two fair daughters play at the knees of Blanche, or creep round the footstool of Austin, waiting patiently for the expected kiss when he looks up from the Great Book, now drawing fast to its close: or, if Roland enter the room, forget all their sober demureness, and, unawed by the terrible "Papæ!" run clamorous for the promised swing in the orchard, or the fiftieth recital of "Chevy Chase."

For my part, I take the goods the gods provide me, and am contented with girls that have the eyes of their mother; but Roland, ungrateful man, begins to grumble that we are so neglectful of the rights of heirs-male. He is in doubt whether to lay the fault on Mr Squills or on us: I am not sure that he does not think it a conspiracy of all three to settle the representation of the martial De Caxtons on the "spindle side." Whosoever be the right person to blame, an omission so

fatal to the straight line in the pedigree is rectified at last, and Mrs Primmins again rushes, or rather rolls—in the movement natural to forms globular and spheral—into my father's room, with—

"Sir, sir—it is a boy!"

Whether my father asked also this time that question so puzzling to metaphysical inquirers, "What is a boy?" I know not: I rather suspect he had not leisure for so abstract a question; for the whole household burst on him, and my mother, in that storm peculiar to the elements of the Mind Feminine—a sort of sunshiny storm between laughter and crying—whirled him off to behold the *Neogilos*.

Now, some months after that date, on a winter's evening, we were all assembled in the hall, which was still our usual apartment, since its size permitted to each his own segregated and peculiar employment. A large screen fenced off from interruption my father's erudite settlement; and quite out of sight, behind that impermeable barrier, he was now calmly winding up that eloquent peroration which will astonish the world, whenever, by Heaven's special mercy, the printer's devils have done with "The History of Human Error." In another nook my uncle had ensconced himself—stirring his coffee (in the cup my mother had presented to him so many years ago, and which had miraculously escaped all the ills the race of crockery is heir to), a volume of *Ivanhoe* in the other hand; and, despite the charm of the Northern Wizard, his eye *not* on the page. On the wall, behind him, hangs the picture of Sir

Herbert de Caxton, the soldier-comrade of Sidney and Drake; and, at the foot of the picture, Roland has slung his son's sword beside the letter that spoke of his death, which is framed and glazed: sword and letter had become as the last, nor least honoured, Penates of the hall:—the son was grown an ancestor.

Not far from my uncle sat Mr Squills, employed in mapping out phrenological divisions on a cast he had made from the skull of one of the Australian aborigines —a ghastly present which (in compliance with a yearly letter to that effect) I had brought him over, together with a stuffed "wombat" and a large bundle of sarsaparilla. (For the satisfaction of his patients, I may observe, parenthetically, that the skull and the "wombat" —that last is a creature between a miniature pig and a very small badger—were not precisely packed up with the sarsaparilla!) Farther on stood open, but idle, the new pianoforte, at which, before my father had given his preparatory hem, and sat down to the Great Book, Blanche and my mother had been trying hard to teach me to bear the third in the glee of "The Chough and Crow to roost have gone,"—vain task, in spite of all flattering assurances that I have a very fine "bass," if I could but manage to humour it. Fortunately for the ears of the audience, that attempt is now abandoned. My mother is hard at work on her tapestry—the last pattern in fashion—to-wit, a rosy-cheeked young troubadour playing the lute under a salmon-coloured balcony: the two little girls look gravely on, prematurely in love, I suspect, with the troubadour; and Blanche

and I have stolen away into a corner, which, by some strange delusion, we consider out of sight, and in that corner is the cradle of the *Neogilos*. Indeed, it is not our fault that it is there—Roland would have it so; and the baby is so good, too, he never cries—at least so say Blanche and my mother: at all events, he does not cry to-night. And, indeed, that child is a wonder! He seems to know and respond to what was uppermost at our hearts when he was born; and yet more, when Roland (contrary, I dare say, to all custom) permitted neither mother, nor nurse, nor creature of womankind, to hold him at the baptismal font, but bent over the new Christian his own dark, high-featured face, reminding one of the eagle that hid the infant in its nest, and watched over it with wings that had battled with the storm: and from that moment the child, who took the name of HERBERT, seemed to recognise Roland better than his nurse, or even mother—seemed to know that, in giving him that name, we sought to give Roland his son once more! Never did the old man come near the infant but it smiled, and crowed, and stretched out its little arms; and then the mother and I would press each other's hand secretly, and were not jealous. Well, then, Blanche and Pisistratus were seated near the cradle, and talking in low whispers, when my father pushed aside the screen and said—

"There—the work is done!—and now it may go to press as soon as you will."

Congratulations poured in—my father bore them with

his usual equanimity; and standing on the hearth, his hand in his waistcoat, he said, musingly, "Among the last delusions of Human Error, I have had to notice Rousseau's phantasy of Perpetual Peace, and all the like pastoral dreams, which preceded the bloodiest wars that have convulsed the earth for more than a thousand years!"

"And to judge by the newspapers," said I, "the same delusions are renewed again. Benevolent theorists go about prophesying peace as a positive certainty, deduced from that sibyl-book the ledger; and we are never again to buy cannons, provided only we can exchange cotton for corn."

Mr Squills (who, having almost wholly retired from general business, has, from want of something better to do, attended sundry "Demonstrations in the North," since which he has talked much about the march of improvement, the spirit of the age, and "us of the nineteenth century").—"I heartily hope that those benevolent theorists *are* true prophets. I have found, in the course of my professional practice, that men go out of the world quite fast enough, without hacking them into pieces, or blowing them up into the air. War is a great evil."

Blanche (passing by Squills, and glancing towards Roland)—"Hush!"

Roland remains silent.

Mr Caxton.—"War is a great evil; but evil is admitted by Providence into the agency of creation, physical and moral. The existence of evil has puzzled

wiser heads than ours, Squills. But, no doubt, there is One above who has His reasons for it. The combative bump seems as common to the human skull as the philoprogenitive,—if it is in our organisation, be sure it is not there without cause. Neither is it just to man, nor wisely submissive to the Disposer of all events, to suppose that war is wholly and wantonly produced by human crimes and follies—that it conduces *only* to ill, and does not as often arise from the necessities interwoven in the framework of society, and speed the great ends of the human race, conformably with the designs of the Omniscient. Not one great war has ever desolated the earth, but has left behind it seeds that have ripened into blessings incalculable!"

Mr Squills (with the groan of a dissentient at a "Demonstration").—"*Oh! oh!* oh!"

Luckless Squills! Little could he have foreseen the shower-bath, or rather *douche*, of erudition that fell splash on his head, as he pulled the string with that impertinent *Oh! oh!* Down first came the Persian War, with Median myriads disgorging all the rivers they had drunk up in their march through the East—all the arts, all the letters, all the sciences, all the notions of liberty that we inherit from Greece—my father rushed on with them all, sousing Squills with his proofs that, without the Persian War, Greece would never have risen to be the teacher of the world. Before the gasping victim could take breath, down came Hun, Goth, and Vandal, on Italy and Squills.

"What, sir!" cried my father, "don't you see that

from those eruptions on demoralised Rome came the regeneration of manhood; the re-baptism of earth from the last soils of paganism; and the remote origin of whatever of Christianity yet exists, free from the idolatries with which Rome contaminated the faith?"

Squills held up his hands, and made a splutter. Down came Charlemagne—paladins and all! There my father was grand! What a picture he made of the broken, jarring, savage elements of barbaric society. And the iron hand of the great Frank—settling the nations and founding existent Europe. Squills was now fast sinking into coma or stupefaction; but, catching at a straw, as he heard the word

"Crusades," he stuttered forth, "Ah! *there* I defy you."

"Defy me there!" cries my father: and one would think the ocean was in the shower-bath, it came down with such a rattle. My father scarcely touched on the smaller points in excuse for the Crusades, though he recited very volubly all the humaner arts introduced into Europe by that invasion of the East; and showed how it had served civilisation, by the vent it afforded for the rude energies of chivalry—by the element of destruction to feudal tyranny that it introduced—by its use in the emancipation of burghs, and the disrupture of serfdom. But he painted, in colours vivid, as if caught from the skies of the East, the great spread of Mahometanism, and the danger it menaced to Christian Europe—and drew up the Godfreys, and Tancreds, and

Richards, as a league of the Age and Necessity, against the terrible progress of the sword and the Koran. "You call them madmen," cried my father, "but the frenzy of nations is the statesmanship of fate! How know you that—but for the terror inspired by the hosts who marched to Jerusalem—how know you that the Crescent had not waved over other realms than those which Roderic lost to the Moor? If Christianity had been less a passion, and the passion had less stirred up all Europe—how know you that the creed of the Arab (which was then, too, a passion) might not have planted its mosques in the forum of Rome, and on the site of Notre Dame? For in the war between creeds—when the creeds are embraced by vast races—think you that the reason of sages can cope with the passion of millions? Enthusiasm must oppose enthusiasm. The crusader fought for the tomb of Christ, but he saved the life of Christendom."

My father paused. Squills was quite passive; he struggled no more—he was drowned.

"So," resumed Mr Caxton, more quietly—"so, if later wars yet perplex us as to the good that the All-wise One draws from their evils, our posterity may read their uses as clearly as we now read the finger of Providence resting on the barrows of Marathon, or guiding Peter the Hermit to the battle-fields of Palestine. Nor, while we admit the evil to the passing generation, can we deny that many of the virtues that make the ornament and vitality of peace sprung up first in the con-

vulsion of war!" Here Squills began to evince faint signs of resuscitation, when my father let fly at him one of those numberless waterworks which his prodigious memory kept in constant supply. "Hence," said he, "hence, not unjustly, has it been remarked by a philosopher, shrewd at least in worldly experience"—(Squills again closed his eyes, and became exanimate)—"it is strange to imagine that war, which of all things appears the most savage, should be the passion of the most heroic spirits. But 'tis in war that the knot of fellowship is closest drawn; 'tis in war that mutual succour is most given—mutual danger run, and common affection most exerted and employed; for heroism and philanthropy are almost one and the same!"*

My father ceased, and mused a little. Squills, if still living, thought it prudent to feign continued extinction.

"Not," said Mr Caxton, resuming—"not but what I hold it our duty never to foster into a passion what we must rather submit to as an awful necessity. You say truly, Mr Squills—war is an evil; and woe to those who, on slight pretences, open the gates of Janus,

> ——'The dire abode,
> And the fierce issues of the furious god.'"

Mr Squills, after a long pause—employed in some of the more handy means for the reanimation of submerged bodies, supporting himself close to the fire in a semi-erect posture, with gentle friction, self-applied, to

* Shaftesbury.

each several limb, and copious recourse to certain steaming stimulants which my compassionate hands prepared for him—stretches himself, and says feebly, "In short, then, not to provoke farther discussion, you would go to war in defence of your country. Stop, sir,—stop, for Heaven's sake! I agree with you—I agree with you! But, fortunately, there is little chance now that any new Boney will build boats at Boulogne to invade us."

Mr Caxton.—"I am not so sure of that, Mr Squills." (Squills falls back with a glassy stare of deprecating horror.) "I don't read the newspapers very often, but the past helps me to judge of the present."

Therewith my father earnestly recommended to Mr Squills the careful perusal of certain passages in Thucydides, just previous to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war (Squills hastily nodded the most servile acquiescence), and drew an ingenious parallel between the signs and symptoms foreboding that outbreak, and the very apprehension of coming war which was evinced by the recent *Io pæans* to peace.* And, after sundry notable and shrewd remarks, tending to show where elements for war were already ripening, amidst clashing opinions and disorganised states, he wound up with

* When this work was first published, Mr Caxton was generally deemed a very false prophet in these anticipations, and sundry critics were pleased to consider his apology for war neither seasonable nor philosophical. That Mr Caxton was right, and the politicians opposed to him have been somewhat ludicrously wrong, may be briefly accounted for—Mr Caxton had read history.

saying—"So that, all things considered, I think we had better just keep up enough of the bellicose spirit, not to think it a sin if we are called upon to fight for our pestles and mortars, our three-per-cents, goods, chattels, and liberties. Such a time must come, sooner or later, even though the whole world were spinning cotton, and printing sprigged calicoes. *We* may not see it, Squills, but that young gentleman in the cradle, whom you have lately brought into light, may."

"And if so," said my uncle, abruptly, speaking for the first time—"if indeed it be for altar and hearth!" My father suddenly drew in and pished a little, for he saw that he was caught in the web of his own eloquence.

Then Roland took down from the wall his son's sword. Stealing to the cradle, he laid it in its sheath by the infant's side, and glanced from my father to us with a beseeching eye. Instinctively Blanche bent over the cradle, as if to protect the *Neogilos;* but the child, waking, turned from her, and, attracted by the glitter of the hilt, laid one hand lustily thereon, and pointed with the other, laughingly, to Roland.

"Only on my father's proviso," said I, hesitatingly. "For hearth and altar—nothing less!"

"And even in that case," said my father, "add the shield to the sword!" and on the other side of the infant he placed Roland's well-worn Bible, blistered in many a page with secret tears.

There we all stood, grouping round the young centre of so many hopes and fears—in peace or in war, born

alike for the Battle of Life. And he, unconscious of all that made our lips silent, and our eyes dim, had already left that bright bauble of the sword, and thrown both arms round Roland's bended neck.

"*Herbert!*" murmured Roland; and Blanche gently drew away the sword—and left the Bible.

END OF THE CAXTONS.

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